Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/croppytale00bani_0

V. R. London
June 1. /39

THE CROPPY.

A Tale.

BY THE O'HARA FAMILY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:
E. L. CAREY & A. HART.
1839.

E. G. DORSEY, PRINTER,
LIBRARY STREET.

THE CROPPY;

A TALE OF 1798.

CHAPTER I.

The seeming interruption to the espousals of Eliza Hartley and Sir William Judkin, proposed in the serious charge made by his impetuous rival against the young Baronet, did not cause any alteration of the day previously fixed for the ceremony, when that charge had, to the satisfaction of Sir Thomas, been disposed of. Accordingly, upon the very morning subsequent to the scene described in the last chapter, indeed, in the maturity of the morning, during which part of it had occurred, all parties concerned arose from their couches, happily earnest in commencing preparations for the important event.

Nor did the public state of things operate to postpone the nuptials; but the contrary. Amid the outward clash of human passion; amid the tumult of hideous rumour, and the positive enacting of acts of frightful character; amid the burning of dwellings by either party, the shedding of blood, the mad shout of popular frenzy, and the screams of terrified fugitives,—Sir Thomas Hartley, having once decided to bestow his daughter on Sir William, only felt increased anxiety that she should now be provided with an additional protector; for he had many reasons to fear that the gathering storm would not pass quietly over his head.

To a bride-elect, no matter how much attached, it is a serious consideration to exchange the laughing gaiety of all-fascinating singleness, for the prospect of matronly cares, and, be her rank what it may, the wife's submissive and dependent state. We cannot therefore aver that, previous to the arrival of Sir William to breakfast, Eliza's thoughts were not a little sobered even by a view so selfish. She could not avoid dwelling upon the reflection that this was her last day of empire; and, much as she assured herself that the young Baronet loved her, and willing as she felt to commit her future happiness to his care, our heroine more than once started at the misgiving that he might not prove a perfectly amiable despot. This was strange, and she told her heart it was. But it seemed still more strange to Eliza, as it will seem to the reader,

that her very last meditation on the subject would, if reduced to words, have assumed a shape like the following. "After all, if Harry Talbot had been as worthy of being loved—that is—if—I mean, in fact, that if Harry Talbot was Sir William Judkin—phoo!—I don't know what I mean—only I wish he *was* Sir William Judkin."

This, to be sure, seems downright nonsense. But, it has often been asked before, and it may be asked again—who shall dive into the workings, wayward as they often appear to be, mysterious as they always are, of that yet-unfathomed mystery, the human heart?

The rich bridal robe lay before Eliza during the occurrence of these thoughts; and vainly did Miss Alicia, previous to the entrance of her maid into the dressing-room, suggest, with her usual old-fashioned suavity, divers rules for the best mode of demeanour at and after the ceremony. Not a word of her aunt's harangue did Eliza hear;—scarce a glance of her mind strayed to the subject; or if any did, it was only for the purpose of arranging the matter all her own way.

A loud shout, the chorus of a thousand throats broke up her reverie, and interrupted Miss Alicia's lecture on matrimony, which, like other lecturers on equally abstruse subjects, the good old lady could only theoretically discuss. At the present juncture, all unusual clamour caused alarm; but the roar of human voices was especially dreaded: and the one lady, almost forgetting that she was so soon to be a bride, and the other that there was speedily to be a union of sympathetic hearts in her family, and under her immediate patronage, both hurried down-stairs, trembling, and very curious to ascertain the meaning of the noise.

They found Sir Thomas Hartley leaning from a window in the drawing-room, and anxiously addressing a throng of persons assembled in the lawn before the house. The crowd was chiefly composed of the men not only of Shawn-a-Gow's village, but of the whole neighbourhood, followed by their women, and by their children of all ages; and they appeared to claim from Sir Thomas a promise, understood to have been given on his part a few hours before, at the smith's lime-tree—namely, that he would become their insurrectionary leader.

The Baronet perceived the dangerous situation in which he now stood. It was evident that the persons before him were not to be trifled with; that, in their moments of excitement and wild self-assertion, respect to rank would guide few of their proceedings; and it became a serious question how he should avoid a connexion with them on the one hand, or protect his family and property from them on the other.

A motley multitude they were. Almost all among them, able to wield a weapon, appeared rudely armed: some with rusty guns,

some with prongs, bludgeons, or scythes; but the greater number, with the formidable pike. Peter Rooney, having long held in his village the character of "a well-spoken man," took a foremost part in public proceedings, so long as strife was only talked of; but now that the furious people resolved on a sanguinary struggle with their opponents, the little man's canonical-looking wig was not able to retain for him that consideration which his diminutive stature destroyed; and though ridiculously enough he had sallied forth with the rest, carrying a pike three times his own length, and, true to his natural taste for the adorning of his person, had mounted a broad green sash over his shoulder, and encircled his hat with a green ribbon, yet Peter Rooney was not destined by "the throops o' the Union o' these parts," to take any lead in actual combat; and he therefore could not be said to be the present admitted head of the assemblage. But the tall grim figure, determinedly and authoritatively resting with one hand on his great pike, in front of the people, and marked in their minds by peculiar strength, peculiar character, and peculiar grievance, for the place he assumed—he seemed to be their temporary leader. And yet did Peter, as he stoutly ranged himself at Shawn-a-Gow's side, hold equal place with the smith, at least, in a tranquil presumption of his own fitness to hold it.

The crowd had approached the house, shouting tremendously; and, amid the pauses of the denser vociferation, gleeish "halloos" came, in imitative vigour, from the novelty-loving boys in the rear; who, farther imitating their fathers or brothers, in action merely—for the impulse was only to merriment in a bustling change of scene—appeared armed with sticks having nails at the ends, or even long rods mounted with pins; the weapon of war being in their minds no more than a plaything. Shrill screams from female throats also joined the hoarser cry: but the greater number of women, leading their children by the hand, or carrying them, gypsey-like, on their backs, were silent; they could only listen to the clamour that announced the abandonment, for a life of hardship, endurance, and fearful danger, of their old homes and "counthry side."

When Sir Thomas Hartley appeared at his drawing-room window, the concourse, pausing a moment in their continuous uproar, gave three distinct cheers, and then stood still and silent, while Peter Rooney stepped forward to a parley.

The little herald made a very "mannerly" salute, lowering his pike, bowing, and half-raising his Sunday hat. Then, while Shawn-a-Gow stood at his side, resting on his weapon, without speaking or moving, he proceeded to deliver one of his usual verbose speeches, which, it is sufficient to mention, invited Sir Thomas Hartley, "barrow-knight," to take the command of the "throops o' the Union" of his own parish, pursuant to a promise

alleged by the speaker to have been given under the lime-tree before the smith's house.

Sir Thomas eagerly proceeded to disabuse the crowd of their error. He assured them, that, even to their present spokesman, he had distinctly stated his resolve to decline the appointment. It was a situation he felt himself unfit for, and his mind was made up to remain neuter during the contest.

The throng at first seemed inclined to adopt, after this reply, the language of intreaty; unused to assume any but the most humble demeanour in the presence of their superiors, such was their natural impulse.

"Your honour always joined the poor, an' you'll join 'em now;" "We'll folly your honour to the world's end!"—"Gineral Hartley is the gineral we'll have, an' no other!" said many voices; and, "Hurra for the brave gineral!" exclaimed another, and again there was a deafening cry.

When he could obtain a second hearing, Sir Thomas more peremptorily rejected the appeal; insisting rather warmly, against being now, a second time, misunderstood.

Peter Rooney, with much "dacency" of speech, but very obstinately and pertinaciously, insisted, in turn, that, on the former occasion, he had not at all been misunderstood.

"What's the rason you have for skulkin' back, Sir Thomas?" abruptly questioned Shawn-a-Gow.

The Baronet at first felt inclined to resent the rudeness of this language, but he recollected the recent provocations to ill-humour experienced by the smith; and he had also observed, among the crowd, movements that caused him to judge such would not be the safer mode of proceeding.

"I do not skulk, as you choose to call it, John Delouchery; I but act on a long-formed and lately expressed resolution, to take no side in the coming struggle."

"Is id becase you think *we* have no cause to turn out for, that you refuse us?—answer me that, Sir Thomas."

"An' if he thinks so, no one bud an Orangeman 'ud think so," said a voice, which Sir Thomas thought he knew.

"I must acknowledge that you have many and great grievances to complain of, but I am sure the mode now resorted to will not redress them."

"You're afeared, Sir Thomas," resumed the same voice; "an' the curse o' Cromwell on all cowards! But ar'n't you afeared iv *us?* ar'n't you afeared we'd dhrag you down from that windee, an' make you march wid us, or die by us?

"I have never been an enemy to the poor people around me, and I do not now expect to be treated as one."

"All talk," said Shawn-a-Gow; "an' talk won't stop the Orangeman's bullet, or quench the blaze he lights: them that's not wid

us is aginst us; an' no coward must stay hidin' in his grand home, while they that has no house to cover 'em is on the hill."

During this dialogue, the feeling of the assemblage had evidently changed from the hope to subdue by intreaty to the impulse to compel by force. Sir Thomas observed, that amid vehement gestures, though whispered comments, some general opinion, probably not of a nature favourable to him, became disseminated. They turned fiercely to each other, stretched forth their arms, or raised high their clenched fists; and some, only stopping now and then to enforce their sentiments, pressed forward, as if to demonstrate superior daring. To the rear he saw a man couching down, perhaps to escape observation from the house, who incessantly and zealously addressed the crowd around him; and from his position came the hostile groups just mentioned. And over all the bustle and clamorous muttering, were heard expressions which fully explained the furious consultation: such as "He must turn out—they're orange that houlds back;—pull him down here—to the duoul wid cowards!" and while a hundred voices thus spoke, one louder than the rest cried "The green for ever, and down wid the orange!" which catchword produced a general scream, that seemed to be tacitly taken as an agreement of opinion; for, as it died away, solemn silence prevailed, and the fierce glances of all were fixed on Sir Thomas Hartley.

"Oncet more, an' for the last time, Sir Thomas," said Shawn-a-Gow—"will you be one among us, or an inemy agin us?"

"For the last time, then, I answer, I can be neither. I cannot be one amongst you, because I do not approve of your rising; and still less can I be an enemy of the people to whom I always wished to appear a friend!"

"Smash the duour!" exclaimed one of those who had just posted himself in front of the throng, determined to carry into effect the resolution that had been vaguely though furiously formed: and there was a rush forward; and a man, darting his pike through a window, made such a crash that the ladies screamed loudly.

"Stop!" cried Shawn-a-Gow, pushing back this depredator, and, after him, the foremost of his hostile band, while he raised his pike, and spoke in a voice that reached the outskirts of the assemblage; "I'll never stand by an' see harum done to Sir Thomas Hartley; he done his best to save—mine—from—" he could not say 'my son,' —"from the murtherers; an', it's thrue he says, he ever and always was our friend, an' no poor man can say he thrampled on him; an' who, then, 'ill daare to do to him what 'ud be bad enough to do to Whaley? Sir Thomas," he continued, lowering his voice, and speaking up to the window, "let you and your's fear nothing; I'll die before your house, to save you and them: bud, take warnin'; join us, an' you can do what you like wid us."

Sir Thomas left the window, and was proceeding down stairs—

"For the mercy of Heaven, Sir Thomas!" cried Miss Alicia, clinging to him; "would you connect yourself with these murderers?"

And, "Father, dear father!" implored Eliza, at his other side.

Assuring both ladies that they need not doubt his prudence, and insisting that both should sit down and allow him freedom to act as he judged fit, the Baronet escaped to the hall, called for the key of the doors, which the alarmed servants had locked; opened the door, and suddenly and boldly presented himself to those who threatened him.

His disappearance from the window had produced a pause of incertitude and inquiry; his abrupt and unexpected re-appearance, within a pike's length of the foremost of the throng, startled all; and, after a moment's thought, the courage and confidence of the act seemed to turn their opinion in his favour. A slight cheer of applause came from the middle of the crowd, and even the daring van of the array pressed back respectfully.

"Attend to me, my good neighbours," he said, and there was an instantaneous stillness: "I come before you with perfect reliance on your good opinion of me, and your good wishes for the ladies of my family. They, at least, merit no ill treatment from the poor man or the poor man's wife, whose cabin they have often tried to cheer when sickness and sorrow came upon it." Many wives and mothers, in the rear, here began to attest, in loud and grateful accents, how truly Sir Thomas had spoken. "If," he continued, "no other reason kept me now at home, there is a domestic reason to keep me; and you all ought to know there is. Can I—would you ask me, to leave your young lady's side, upon this morning? Will you not rather permit me to acquit towards her my last act of duty and love as a father, and drink health and happiness to her, in her new character of bride and wife? Come!" he went on, in a hearty tone, as servants, obeying his previous orders, appeared with wine, spirits, and refreshments—and one of the attendants was Kitty Delouchery:—"come, neighbours! three old Irish cheers, upon her wedding-day, for the heiress of Hartley Court!"

And three old Irish cheers were given accordingly. And as the cup and the food went round, almost every bosom in the throng glowed as affectionately towards the entertainer as the feeling against him had before been strong and determined. Repeated cheers for himself, as well as for "the posy o' the Slaney," continued to break forth; the half-famished and tired women in the rear, gabbled praises and prayers more loudly than before; and their grown offspring, merely conscious of a change of the scene for the better, exerted their tiny pipes too, and in mimic warfare tilted at each other with their mimic pikes, or, bestriding them, caracolled and galloped about in all the pride of cavaliers and warriors.

In a short time Sir Thomas saw the whole concourse depart peaceably; only putting up continued shouts for him and his. Perhaps it did not a little promote the ultimate harmony of the scene, that Kitty Delouchery, who had accepted Sir Thomas's offer of protection, assisted, as has been said, in distributing the peace-offering. The eyes of many moistened as, checking their own eagerness to partake of the Baronet's cheer, they watched the poor, tearful, trembling, and yet half-smiling girl, offer to her grim and haggard parent the only nourishment he had tasted since the previous night. And ere the stern Gow turned away to stride before the throng, he kissed his child's cheek, and addressed her present protector.

"It was never *my* thought to hurt or harum a dog o' yours, Sir Thomas; bud by fright, or by fair words, if you could be made to turn to us, it 'ud be betther for us all. God bless you! for puttin' a roof over the poor colleen's head; the mother iv her is gone stark mad about the counthry; an' I have nothin' left to do bud to make them that sent her out pay dear for their work."

So saying, the fearful gathering of his brow, which had momentarily relaxed a little, returned in all its fierceness, and he strode heavily to lead the multitude on their way.

Scarce had the lawn been cleared of the riotous assemblage, when a carriage drove into the avenue-gate; and new palpitations agitated the bosoms of Miss Alicia and her niece, at the discovery that it was occupied by Sir William Judkin, a young gentleman of his acquaintance, and the clergyman of the parish. In a few seconds, the ladies, accompanied by bridesmaid and attendants, were closeted from every eye.

In such times of commotion, the marriage might not safely have been celebrated in the church; and it was therefore acceded by the clergyman, that he would attend at Hartley Court. For the same reasons, all parties agreed that it should be a strictly private marriage.

The bridal breakfast was laid out, the gentlemen had exhausted all the commonplace topics that each tried to propose, and they were more than tired with waiting, when at length, heralded by her aunt, and leaning on her bridesmaid, Eliza Hartley, who in a few minutes was to cease to be Eliza Hartley, entered the apartment.

Did a lady hold our pen, it would be expected of her minutely to describe the attire of the very lovely bride. We, however, may plead our sex as exemption from a task which, to own the truth, ignorance of many terms of a lady's wardrobe of that day, rather than disinclination to display our acquirements, interdicts us from attempting. We are only able to inform the reader, that, as some have said before us, our dear heroine was decorated with—or, more gallantly, if not more truly, we should prefer to say—that the bride adorned a robe of lustrous white; that her golden hair

was twined through less attractive pearls; and that the necklace of the same which curved round her neck, ceased to be fair or bright in its eclipsed situation. And yet all this union of the fascinating in nature and in art, of rich and graceful costume and loveliness of person was momentarily forgotten by us as we gazed upon the timid, dimpling countenance, now pale and disturbed, now more assured, re-assuming its "celestial rosy" blushes, and smiling in response to the smiles of lover or of father.

Charming creatures will tremble when they find themselves on the brink of that precipice to which, through paths of flowers, themselves have lured the way. And Eliza Hartley trembled too. Yet it was not the tremor of fear; it was—but 'tis our better course again to put in a recent plea, when we add, that, in truth, we do not know what it was.

To the eyes of her entranced lover it might appear, however, partly to mean an avowal that she was a tender flower, entrusting herself to his fostering, and depending upon him for stay, and nurture, through all the storms of future life. And if ever there stood up, prepared to become a husband, a young man, full manfully looking his fitness and devotion to discharge such a task, it was Sir William Judkin. Nay, the smiling heart of Eliza might have whispered as much, when, for a single glance, her eye took a quick survey of her destined lord, confronting her in the ripe bloom of a masculine beauty, in symmetry of person and limb, and with an expression, upon his fine features, of the fondest consciousness of the character he must soon assume.

Tender and touching is the solemnity of a marriage ceremony. We have never beheld but one of the fair principals of such a scene whose eye remained uninfected with gentle moisture, and that was a lady of a certain age, who, to do her justice, vainly endeavoured to squeeze out a tear, all the time that the sparkling orb would laugh against her will at the good fortune it at last saw before it. Eliza was far removed from that period of life when merely an escape into shackles, without much reference to the individual under whom they must be worn, is said to fill the female heart with joy; and so soon as the ceremony had ended, and that her husband saluted her for his own, tears more than drowned her smiles; and when her father took her softly in his arms, profusely did she weep upon his bosom the farewell she had no tongue to utter.

But it was a startling sound that caused her to raise her head from its sacred resting place, and to look around her in alarm. There was the furious galloping of horses to the house; there was the clamour of heavy steps and loud voices in the hall; there was the bound and clang of armed men up the stairs; the door of the wedding apartment was rudely flung open, and Captain Talbot, accompanied by a number of his yeomen, stamped forward.

He stood for a moment glaring around him, each glance darting fire, and his livid lips quivering with passion.

"What means this ruffian violence?" questioned the bridegroom, while Eliza clung to her father, and the rest of the bridal group shrank aside in terror.

"Back! back!" answered Talbot; "keep him back, men!" and the yeomen accordingly interposed.

"Tell me, sir," continued the intruder, leading the clergyman aside to the recess of a window,—"tell me, sir, are—they—married?"

"They are," he was answered.

He paused; his eyes rolled with frenzy; he shivered with rage. With a resounding slap he spread his hands over his face, and ground the iron heels of his boots into the floor.

There was a dead pause. Sir Thomas Hartley anticipated the object of the intrusion, and calmly awaited the result, his eyes resting on Talbot. Eliza still clung to him, and, shaking through every joint, also watched the demeanour of the dreaded visitor. Sir William Judkin stood erect, with knitted brow, his eyes following her's; in fact, the regards of all fixed on the same object.

It might be half a minute that the mute observation of his conduct continued—a long period, when the tick of each second of time is told by the ear of appalled suspense. At length Talbot suddenly withdrew the veiling hands from his face; and it was pale as death, and now calm and stern. He took a survey of the circle around him, and spoke slowly and clearly.

"Sir Thomas Hartley and Sir William Judkin, I arrest you both as traitors to the King and Constitution!"

A piercing scream, that, from its obvious effects upon him, seemed to dart like an arrow through the officer's brain, followed this announcement; and Eliza, yet clinging, with one arm round his neck, to her father, and extending the other towards her husband, as if she would catch him to herself for safety, might have suggested a beautiful image of youthful anguish grasping her last stay, and invoking her last hope.

"Degraded and wretched being!" exclaimed Sir Thomas Hartley; "is it thus you come to take the revenge you have threatened?"

"I am here, because I am ordered here, Sir Thomas," answered Talbot sternly: "I came but to perform a duty."

"Well, sir," answered the Baronet, in a tone of gloomy foreboding, "whatever may be the fate of my only child; whether she be left fatherless, or widowed and fatherless, both—"

"Father, beloved father! what dreadful words are these you speak?" interrupted the horror-stricken Eliza.

"My poor girl!" he answered, tenderly folding her to his bosom: "I say, that whether you are to be fatherless or widowed,—whe-

ther or not we outlive this attack made upon us,—I rejoice, my lamb, at your escape from that tiger! Oh, what a fate had been your's, linked to such a monster!"

"What! he would separate us? tear us from one another?—William, come here! come here!"

She worked, in convulsed earnestness, the hand of her bare, extended arm, which was as perfect in its form, and as white and shining, as ever sculptor chiselled.

The bridegroom broke through the opposing yeomen, and gained her side. She flung that arm around him, and "Surely, surely," she continued, "there is not that man alive will drag from me my father and my husband?"

"How is this most dear and most beautiful creature to be disposed of?" questioned Sir William of the elder Baronet.

"Even leave her to the care of the Almighty!" answered Sir Thomas; "we must face our fate; the father of the innocent and the helpless will not desert her."

"But, Sir Thomas, consider; the present proceeding certainly has reference to her; and, in our absence, must she not stand exposed to the machinations of yonder villain?"

"True, true, my son; so long as we live to watch over her, Eliza must be at our side, wherever we go. My daughter accompanies her father and her husband," he continued, addressing Talbot; "I should suppose there can be no objection?"

"It cannot be, Sir Thomas Hartley: you and he are my sole charge; except, indeed, that my instructions extend to forbid all intercourse with your friends."

"Now, villain! your drift is perceived," cried Sir William Judkin.

"I answer no impertinence," said Captain Talbot, haughtily.

"Send Reily hither," resumed Sir Thomas, addressing one of the alarmed servants who crowded to the door of the apartment.

"That man is also my prisoner, and cannot now wait on you, Sir Thomas," said the unflinching Talbot.

"I perceive, indeed, we are every way beset; and can no longer hesitate to recognize the object of this arrest—violence to my child is contemplated in my absence. Hearken, monster! can the man I once knew—or thought I knew, be so sunk in baseness as to contemplate the daughter's dishonour by means of the father's murder?—What! you turn away, and do not answer? You dare not look at me! dare not meet my eye! 'Tis so—'tis so. God help me! I see we have to deal with a fiend."

"Tut, Sir Thomas," he was answered, when the person addressed had succeeded in mastering the strong feeling he turned aside to disguise; "this is idle catechising: I am here on no such purpose; mine is a distinct and plain duty, that, as I have said,

refers to none but you and that person; your horses are at the door, and I outstay my time."

"Talbot," said Sir Thomas, in an appalled and solemn accent, "I did not think the earth contained such a demon!"

"Men, move down-stairs with the prisoners," rejoined the stern commander: and the frowning soldiers of civil-war advanced to seize on their prey. Eliza had been drooping between her two supporters; she was suddenly revived, burst from the arms of her father and her husband, and flung herself at the feet of her former lover. So rapid was her motion, that neither Sir Thomas nor Sir William could interpose to prevent the degrading step.

"Harry Talbot!" she cried, clasping her hands together, but, as she held them up in supplication, the wedding-ring met his eye; "lowly and humbly I petition for your mercy—do not tear them from me—pity, pity, Harry Talbot! when first I knew you, little did I think that by you—by you my heart was to be crushed and broken! I was then a proud, joyful young creature: I am now a very wretched being. Harry, be merciful to me!"

Husband and father both sprang to her, and took her by the arms to raise her up.

"Daughter!" said the latter; "any thing but this: do not degrade yourself—do not degrade me—do not degrade Sir William Judkin! Rise, my child—we would not accept of safety at this price—the prostration of my high-minded Eliza before that despicable Talbot!"

"Do not, do not force me up, my father!" struggling to keep herself in a kneeling posture:—"I caught the tear of human pity in his eye—there is mercy yet where it sprang from, and it will flow amply, and fall like the shower on the parched bosom of her who always regarded him with a sister's affection: indeed, indeed, I shall prevail!—he was not merciless when I knew him long ago."

"You knew him not, my beloved," said Sir William Judkin; "knew him not for what he is—a detected slanderer, and a mean, revengeful coward!"

Eliza might have seen in Talbot's eyes the relenting moisture she spoke of, or it might have been her own swimming and glittering eyes that deceived her. He certainly was bending down towards her, with a regard very different from the previous expression of his flashing glances, when, at the remark of his rival, he suddenly drew up, turned away, and walked some paces distant.

Again Eliza broke from her detainers, and again was on her knees before him.

"Harry!—earliest friend—look on me, for the last time; prostrate, grovelling to you for mercy."

"Rise up, madam," he replied, in his former cool, unshaken tone, "your father is right—you should not thus humble yourself.

But oh," he continued, lowering his voice, "had you attended to my warning, this never could have happened."

Instantly Eliza sprang up, sternly erect as ever she had been; and, beautiful as she was, scorn and aversion could not be more powerfully expressed than by her features and mien they were. Her head swayed back, her pencilled brow knit; her hands dashed the plentiful tears away; and her looks fixed upon the terrible man of power, with a sudden vigour which mastered him. He could stand unmoved the wrathful words and threatening frowns of her father and her husband; but he shrank dismayed before the scornful anger of youthful beauty.

"Ah!" she cried, "abased and despised man!—You *do* avow your motive!—You dare, at the very moment of your aggression on the father and the husband, avow it to the daughter and the wife! Degradation, indeed, it would be then, to request or take the slightest favour at your hands. We must not stoop ourselves to the despised,—ay, Sir, the despised—and the defied too!—for I feel I can defy you!—Father, fear not for me," she added, turning her back upon Talbot, and taking Sir Thomas's hand, who met her with smiles of fond and proud triumph.

"Fear not for me: think you I dread any thing that trembling wretch can attempt against me? Farewell, father! Farewell, husband! Since I cannot accompany you, I will follow you; and you will find that the light-hearted Eliza has courage to brave even the worst for those she loves."

"Now, indeed, you are the child of my bosom," said the parent, folding her to his breast.

"And Sir William," she continued, "confidently reckon on my safety, as I will reckon on yours; we shall crush this viper and leave him in the dust."

Now we attend you, Sir, said Sir Thomas, turning to the spot where Talbot had stood, but he was no longer there; and the yeomen intimated that he awaited his prisoners outside the house.

Some little remnant of shame is left to him," resumed Sir Thomas; "but, Eliza, we must attend him. God be with you! If this be our last meeting on earth, you have the blessing of a parent, to whom, as infant, girl, and woman, you were and are a treasure. Almighty Father," he continued, raising one arm upward, as with the other he supported her—"thou who givest shelter and protection to the orphan, and a roof and a safeguard to innocence, to thy care I commit my darling; a charge worthy of that care, if goodness and meekness united were ever found worthy. Alicia," turning to where the confounded and trembling old lady sat, "will you not advance to wish me adieu?"

"Brother—I cannot,—I am not able! I have tried to rise from this chair, but I cannot."

"Then, my poor sister, I will go to you;" and as Sir William

Judkin strained his beautiful bride in a last embrace, the brother and sister also exchanged farewells.

The yeomen became impatient—the parting was over. Eliza saw her husband and father descend the stairs guarded. From the windows of the bridal apartment, she saw them ride off amid a troop of yeoman cavalry, headed by her early lover. She watched them down the avenue until they disappeared from her straining eyes; and then all her heroic resolutions giving way, with one look at her bridal robe and bridal ornaments, she sank down beside her insensible aunt—a victim decked, indeed, for the sacrifice.

But when restored to her senses by those who came in to attend her, Eliza spent no time in useless wailings or inaction. Proceeding to her dressing room, she laid aside, in what feelings she might, her pearls, her bridal white wreath, and her bridal white robe, and assumed an attire fit to go abroad in.

CHAPTER II.

Upon an eminence commanding the river Slaney, and also giving a bird's-eye view of the old town of Enniscorthy, partly lying in a hollow, partly climbing up steep ascents, stood an ancient castle, built of reddish stone, with flanking round towers at each angle; which, through scanty slit and loophole, admitted light and air to the winding stairs within.

In the year 1798, this feudal structure was ruinous, and, however interesting from the recollections or inquiries to which it gave birth, cheerless. Now it is tenanted; comfortably, if not tastefully repaired, and its character of modern appropriation and care, singularly contrasts with its former state of lonely dilapidation, and even with the antique ruggedness that still clothes its walls. Large windows invite a broader flood of day into well-furnished apartments, than could enter through its primitive loop-holes to half show its tapestried or wainscoted pride, in those times when safety was considered in preference to light or ventilation.

And this, the Castle of Enniscorthy, as it is called, was the district prison upon the day of the arrest of Sir Thomas Hartley and Sir William Judkin: and the court-martial by which the former was tried, held its sitting in the ground apartment or hall of the edifice, gained after entering the low arched doorway.

The reader is aware that the ordinary tribunals of justice were now suspended, and that, according to the form of military procedure alone, was the crime of disloyalty to King and State investigated and punished. And before such a court, hastily summoned together, Sir Thomas Hartley, late in the afternoon of the day of his arrest, appeared to take his chance for life or death.

His arbitrary judges assembled under circumstances unfavourable to cool inquiry or scrupulous discussion. But a few miles distant from the place where they sat, the insurgents, in all the fiery impetus that enraged passions can supply, were wreaking vengeance on their enemies, or upon their supposed enemies; and hourly accounts of slaughter and conflagration marking the separate routes of separate throngs who hurried to join a main body, or committed by that main body itself, reached Enniscorthy from trembling fugitives just escaping alive, and no more, out of the flaming house, or the fatal mêlée. It was also expected that the town would be attacked; and, in their feelings of mixed abhorrence and fear, little consideration, or even protracted inquiry, could be expected from the court-martial, by any person standing accused of a connexion with the authors of such appalling acts and plans.

It will, we hope, be recollected, that at a certain review of the troops of the County of Wexford, Sir Thomas Hartley had attended for the purpose of arraigning before the inspecting General, a certain officer of dragoons. And when Sir Thomas entered the gloomy hall of the castle of Enniscorthy, the same revengeful eye rested upon his, which that day, after the rebuke of the General, plainly told the Baronet he might expect a requital in kind, if ever it came to the turn of the Dragoon Major to afford it to him. In fact, this very man sat as president of the military court; and his glance towards the prisoner, the moment they confronted each other, derived part of its expression from a still vivid sense of the humiliation Sir Thomas had caused him to endure, and part from the no less substantial sense of injury impressed upon such a mind as his was, by the recollection that, out of his own pocket, he had been obliged to make good the losses sustained, at the hands of him and his men, amongst the Baronet's tenants.

A few yeomen officers, formerly of the prisoner's acquaintance, stood or sat around; but the averted looks, or the cool and formal nod, which, while it vouchsafes recognition, proclaims an end to friendship or kindly intercourse, told him he had no friends even in their group. And indeed not a single eye in the hall beamed hope upon him, not a single tongue whispered good wishes or commiseration, as he took his prescribed seat at one end of the rude table round which were seated the informal arbiters of his destiny.

The charges against him were announced, and without counsel

or agent to advise, or friend to assist, Sir Thomas prepared his mind for his defence.

The first evidence on the part of the King was Rattling Bill Nale.

This man deposed, that an agent from the directors of the United Irish conspiracy, in Dublin, had visited the neighbourhood of Hartley Court, in the month of February, for the purpose of organizing the present insurrection. That the prisoner had accompanied him to a treasonable assemblage, held in the house of John Delouchery, the smith. And farther the witness deposed, that Sir Thomas Hartley had been chosen General by the people of Shawn-a-Gow's village—the same body of insurgents who had just burnt and plundered Captain Whaley's house; and that, on their way to perpetrate the outrage, food and spirits were supplied to them on the lawn in front of Sir Thomas's mansion.

The prisoner spent some time in cross-examining this ruffian.

Did he not know, as all knew, that such agents as he had spoken of, never admitted their agency to any but assured friends? The witness knew it very well. Was he not also aware, that, even to assured friends, such agents did not disclose their names? Yes; and *that* the witness had a notion of, too. How then—not having been presented to him as an assured friend—the witness's own admission—could he pretend to call the supposed person an emissary from the directors in Dublin? or how identify him, when he did not know his name?

The witness coolly produced a paper, which he alleged to have once been in the possession of the individual in question, and which, in instructions addressed to him by name, prescribed the route of his inspecting tour through the South of Ireland, and directed his attention to Sir Thomas Hartley, amongst others, as a true friend to Ireland—construed to mean, beyond dispute, a sworn conspirator and rebel.

How had the paper got into witness's hand? if, indeed, formerly the property of the agent, to whom witness had never been introduced, how *could* it come into his hands?

The witness would tell Sir Thomas, then; because he was in a humour to be civil, when civility "broke no bones betwixt 'em." Did'nt he see the agent reading it, when he peeped in at the rebelly meeting in Shawn-a-Gow's private room? and soon after that, when his honour's man was seeing the stranger safe back to Hartley Court, he, witness, was not so unmannerly as not to give them his company on the way; and then when Tim Reily went to lead out the traveller's horse, and left them standing together, "by the hokey," he, witness, just managed to borrow it out of the agent's pocket. Sir Thomas saw that the fellow had taken his measures and prepared his evidence too well and coolly to be shaken from his direct statement; indeed, so plausibly did the real facts he swore to

furnish conclusions of the guilt attributed to the prisoner, that it seemed useless to combat farther with Nale. The Baronet's only hope was, that he might invalidate his testimony by exhibiting his profligate character to those whose duty it was to balance one against the other.

In this view, he demanded of the witness what was his occupation in life?

"Och, then, by the livin' farmer," that would be making his catechist as wise as himself: but witness would give a sketch of it. "He just carried on the war by hook or by crook; and, faith, often got his daily bread, ay, and his butter too, as the fool said, when many a better fellow, maybe, couldn't pick up a crumb."

Sir Thomas pressed his question: By what means did the witness get his livelihood, at present?

Sure, that was easy to be told: as Sir Thomas seemed curious to know, witness would tell him the fun of it; though, considering how Sir Thomas just now stood, one would think he need not be at the trouble of asking; however, in a spirit of pure civility witness vouchsafed to say that his present means of existence were derived from giving information, to good loyal gentlemen of the King, against rebels and Papists.

Had witness ever assisted to make any of those rebels, against whom he so informed?

Now that was a cranky question, and one that witness would not like "the boys" should hear him answer, or be told that he had answered; but he had so much confidence in Sir Thomas's honour, (the rascal meant that he was sure of the fate which awaited him,) that, still in a polite spirit, he would admit he had made "plenty of 'em."

Sir Thomas, after pointing out to the Court the danger of crediting the oath of a person so infamous, said he had done with the witness; and Rattling Bill Nale was conveyed out of the castle as stealthily as he had been spirited into it, and soon took his route to incite to the perpetration of crimes, which, without his agency, might not have been committed, some of these he had himself initiated.

The next witness was Captain Whaley. This military magistrate deposed, that Sir Thomas Hartley had been in company at his, Captain Whaley's house, with Priest Rourke, now one of the rebel leaders; that the very night before the present day, he had interfered to prevent the punishment Captain Whaley was inflicting on known rebels; that he had threatened him, at the same time, with the rebellion which almost immediately after broke out, and one of the first atrocities of which was the burning and pillaging of witness's own house: and witness entertained no doubt that the refreshments distributed to the rebels, on Sir Thomas

Hartley's lawn, *were* distributed for the purpose of encouraging them to that very outrage.

In his cross-examination by the prisoner, Captain Whaley admitted that the story of Sir Thomas's alleged connexion with the destroyers of his property, was built upon Nale's report. Sir Thomas pressed him as to his having mistaken the meaning of the words which, according to the witness, threatened all loyal men with a rising throughout the whole County of Wexford; but Captain Whaley was quite sure he could not have mistaken so plain a matter.

One of the inhabitants of the village was next brought forward, and he deposed to the nomination and election of the prisoner to a command over the rebels of the army. He farther stated, that he had been among the throng at Hartley Court; that he partook of the food and whiskey sent out; and that all had understood that Sir Thomas gave a promise to follow the people, and assume his station over them, as soon as his daughter's marriage should be concluded.

Peter Rooney, with all his boasted superiority of intellect was a simple little man. He had been entrapped by Nale. He could corroborate that witness's testimony as to the fact of a military meeting having been held at Shawn-a-Gow's, the evening that the Dublin agent attended. He could also depose that that individual had returned from Shawn-a-Gow's to Hartley Court, escorted by Tim Reily. All this and more he could depose, and he was placed on the table in hopes that he would do so. But Peter's simplicity was not more remarkable than his sense of honour. The court could not get him to answer a single question. They threatened him with instant death, and he showed that strong though unostentatious courage also formed an element of his character. "Well, good gintlemen," he said, "a man can die bud the oncet; an' so, gi' me the priest, for half an' hour, or the likes o' that, an' I'll be prayin' for them that kills me: bud, if ye won't, the Lord have mercy on my poor sinful sowl:" and he engaged in his devotions with all the fervour of a man preparing for his mortal exit.

The threat of immediate execution changed into a more provident though not more merciful sentence. A triangle, one of the necessary adjuncts of a court-martial in Ireland at the time of our story, had been constructed in the court-yard of the castle; to this Peter Rooney was tied; and the diminutive but resolute being, with what would have been called heroism in another cause, and certainly with an unflinching constancy of heart which might shame some giants in his situation, bore hundreds of lashes, inflicted by muscular arms, until, from mere loss of blood, he repeatedly fainted. And still nothing would he confess: to every question he was silent, and the very words which escaped his lips

were, (we quote truly,) "it's all nothin' to the sufferin's of Him that died to save us."

When, for the third time, he recovered his senses, he was standing in the presence of the court-martial, supported on either side by two yeomen. His head, divested of its ornamental covering, was bald; his face pale and piteous; and the glance he sent round was one of stupor. Again they questioned him as to his knowledge of Sir Thomas Hartley's connexion with the insurgents. He made an effort to speak, but the words died on his lips, and his head dropped on his chest. Some liquor was administered, not in pity or mercy, but that he might regain sufficient strength and sense to enunciate the words which it was expected would at last convey the information demanded of him. Peter accordingly recovered, and, after many repetitions of the question, was brought to comprehend its import, and then, slowly turning his half-closed eyes, until they fixed on Sir Thomas Hartley, "I'll have no man's blood upon me," he said, or rather whispered, "I'll die in pace; God forgive me my sins!"

In anger responsive to the angry signals of the president, his tall supporters dragged the little man away, again tied him up, and then flung him, without medical attendance of any kind, into prison, whence he was liberated the following day by the triumphant insurgents.

Sir Thomas Hartley was doomed to witness another instance of courageous resistance to the commands of the court-martial, which even more nearly appealed to his heart. Tim Reily was placed on the table, and asked if he had not accompanied his master to John Delouchery's house, upon a certain evening? True to the prominent feature of his character, he first answered evasively, in a strain of pleasantry, only more bitter and subdued than his usual manner, in hatred of his catechists, and consciousness of that terrible power they could exercise over him. Provoked into ominous indignation, the president said—"Hearken, fellow, you saw the man who stood here before you; as he has been dealt with, you shall be dealt with, if for a moment longer you palter with this court."

"Ay?" questioned Tim, still in a tone of irony; then, suddenly he changed his accents and his manner into what, in a person of more consideration, might be called dignity, "and will your grand honours, all round about, tell me this: did ye bring me here, thinkin' to get me to say one word that 'ud hurt my masther? Och, an' ye never made a worse guess; lash away, hang away; bud," Tim continued, turning a tearful and devoted look upon Sir Thomas, "if the boy that ate your bread, and dhrank your dhrink, an' slept undher one roof wid you, masther, sence the day his ould father left him starvin' an' naked—if he ever open his lips to do a

hair o' your head hurt or harum, may the horned duoul have him, body an' sowl, for a rascal an' a thrator! amin, I pray God."

"Thank you, my poor fellow," said Sir Thomas, instinctively offering his hand, which Tim, bounding off the table, threw himself on his knees to accept and kiss, "I thank you for your love, but do not injure yourself on my account."

"Injure myself, masther! Och, an' this the greatest day of Tim's life,—yer honours," he resumed, again standing before the judges, and speaking more composedly than ever he had done, "yer honours hard what I said, I believe; an' I mane no offence; bud that's all I have to say to yer honours."

Tim was forced off to the triangle: on the way, his guards buffeted and struck him with their weapons, but he staggered under the blows, without complaining.

Sir Thomas Hartley had learned, from the rude conversation and abuse of those who first took charge of him, the prominent accusations for which he ought to be prepared; and had found means to despatch, before his trial, emissaries to summon some evidences in his favour. He wished to show that his conduct to the crowd at Hartley Court was an act of self-preservation. His upper servants came to the gate of Enniscorthy castle to depose to this effect; but there, Captain Talbot was officer of the guard, and—as if his vengeance could only be satiated by the absolute shedding of innocent blood—he caused those persons to be pushed away, and so left his former friend no materials for a defence, save his own protestations, and an appeal to the court. Sir Thomas was listened to without interruption. His judges consulted together for a few minutes after he sat down; and there was more than the expression even of party spirit in the eye of the president, when he arose to pass sentence of immediate death, with however—marking it as a favour—the attendance of a clergyman. Accordingly, the same clergyman who that morning had performed the marriage ceremony at Hartley Court, attended the condemned culprit.

It has been said that an attack upon Enniscorthy town, by the insurgents, was expected to take place before morning; and therefore all loyal men deemed it particularly expedient that Sir Thomas should die at an early period of the night, lest he might be rescued and prove an efficient and formidable leader.

CHAPTER III.

The night fell, and, as if to sympathize with the coming scene, fell darkly. No moon was in the sky, and, unusually for the time of the year, black masses of clouds rolled overhead.

In the court of Enniscorthy castle a gallows now confronted its younger brother, the triangle. At a short distance from the more fatal though not less terrible apparatus, the yeomen who had lately guarded it, stood in a group, as they turned their eyes where a single taper, held by their commander, Captain Talbot, gave a very feeble and imperfect light to direct the proceedings of two men who bore a dead body, just taken down from the place of execution.

"He was a good ould Protestan' gentleman, afther all, an' his hand never aginst the poor; an' he'll be missed in the County of Waxford, when these times are over," said one of the hitherto mute spectators.

"By this soord," said another, "I didn't like the business this morning: did you see the poor daughter? her screeches went to my heart."

"They say her new husband 'ill folly his father-in-law."

"And why not?" asked a gruff voice, "them that purtends to be Protestants, to go and join with the bloody Romans! I'd sthring up all such, the same day I'd let a Roman live—why not, I say?"

"Why not?" echoed another voice, though not of their group.

"Who spoke?" they asked each other: but none could tell, for no one except themselves now appeared within view: and after a pause they resumed their conversation.

"For all that," said the yeoman who had first spoken, "if I was in young Capt'n Talbot's coat, I wouldn't be the man to stand foremost against Sir Thomas Hartley: many a time he broke bread and dhrank healths wid him he watched this night till he saw him dead, dead."

"Dead, dead," repeated the same voice which had before somewhat startled the yeomen.

The coward group looked fearfully around, and then into each others' faces. The last words sounded as if a screech-owl from the castle turret had syllabled them.

"Could it be?"—began the most superstitious of the men, about to utter a fearful thought—"whisht!" cried the gruff soldier, "listen, it may come again."

There are moments when supernatural fear will overpower the

strongest minds. In the present instance, under the concealing gloom of night, life had just been forced from a human being, who a moment before breathed an inhabitant of earth; and the man might for an instant conjecture that the screaming words thus addressed to witnesses of the dark deed, upon the spot where it had been done, were uttered by the troubled spirit, as it flitted from its mortal tenement.

"It *will* come again," the gruff yeoman was answered. "I spoke the words that make ye tremble, cowards as ye are:"—and now they saw a female figure rushing up to them from behind one of the towers of the old building.

"Ye have done a murder," continued the woman, confronting them,—"a murder ye shall answer for, while there's a pike over a Croppy's shoulder. They're going to bury the body; but bury it as deep as they can dig, 'twill rise in judgment against the murderers."

"This is your ghost, Dan," said the gruff yeoman: "seize the Croppy jade!"

"Seize me, seize me—ay, this is your word to every one, now-a-days," she replied, stepping backward and forward by turns."

"Be off, or I'll cut you down!"

"Don't waste your valour upon me; you'll want it all shortly"—and she began to sing at a ringing pitch, a verse of one of the insurgent songs—

> "Vive la, the black potatoes,
> Vive la, the white ones too,
> Vive la, the French are comin'—
> What will these poor yeomen do?"

"Don't keep gapin' so, Dan," said the gruff fellow, as he laid hands on her—"come along, you baggage; I'll put you where you must alter your tune."

She struggled, but it might seem only with a show of struggling: the door of the castle was opened to the summons of her captor, and with heavy curses he pushed her in.

"By the great Saizor, you sthrappado, you, if there's more o' your jaw, I'll disciple you, so I will," said Saunders Smyly, who received her in the ruined hall. As Captain Whaley's deputy, he had the government of the prison; and he strided about, rattling his keys, with all the consequence of a military jailer.

"What threat do you dare to make?" she demanded, suddenly advancing upon the vapouring Bobadil.

"I say!" he roared out, much startled by the expression of her countenance, which looked fearfully fierce in the dim light afforded by a single sconce that hung against the rough wall; "I say! by the left thigh o' Pharoh's horse—"

"And *I* say, by the right thigh of Pharaoh's horse," pursuing

him as he retreated, "that I'll roll your head at my feet, you Harry-long-legs," and snatching at his sword, she drew it from the scabbard, and flourished it round his ears.

"Comrade!" cried the still retreating cavalier, addressing the sentinel who guarded the door—"charge her in the rear! nations, honest woman, what are you at? asy, asy, I bid you!" as she closed him against the wall—"Comrade! cut her down! she'll gash me, by the great Saizor."

"Hah, hah," laughed his armed comrade—"by the gun in my hand, the woman is batin' him; why don't you give her some o' the back-slaps, an' front-cuts, you'd be curry-whibblin' round our heads, Saundhers? now's the time to show us the good o' them."

"Answer me what I shall ask of you," said the conquering heroine, while Smyly cringed against the wall; and she spoke in a tone of voice that could not be heard by the sentinel.

"Away wid yourself, an' I will."

"In what part of the castle is Sir William Judkin confined?"

"He's in the far tower."

"Are you certain of that?"

"I'd gi' you my oath I locked him in there awhile agone, wid this kay."

"Then, there's your sword again, you boasting coward!"

"An' now, you sthrappado," grinned the trooper, "what talk had you? I'll—"

"Will you?" quickly drawing a large pistol from under her peculiar dress, and presenting it as quickly;—"What?"

"I mane to say, by the horns o' Moses, only you're a kind iv a woman, I'd thransmogrophy you."

"Well, be it so; but we had better remain friends; I have here some of the sweet waters of oblivion." She produced a black bottle, and applied it to her mouth, perhaps rather with the appearance of drinking some of its contents, than doing so in reality.

If there was any one propensity more palpable than cowardice and cruelty in the hero of the cat-o'-nine tails, it was love of good liquor; and he could pour whiskey into himself for a long while ere it produced the slightest addition to his usual exaggeration of speech and manner. Now his teeth watered as he saw the mad-looking woman apparently gulp down that which, from the fragrance it emitted, could be nothing less than the most potent kind of the beverage he loved.

"Here," said the female, to his great relief, "drink and be valorous."

He seized the bottle, and took a long, long draught; yet, in the very act of tasting liberally of her bounty, Saunders planned how he should master the tigress before him. He proposed to retire and order in a reinforcement to seize her. But ere he had made

an end either of his libation or his resolves, she snatched the bottle from his grasp, and, approaching the jealous sentinel, invited him also to drink.

"Whoever or whatever you are," observed the man, "here goes to taste the oneen;" and he too imbibed a good mouthful, though nothing to compare to one of Saunders Smyly's least; who, however, crying fair play, pleaded to come in again in his turn; and, accordingly, the bottle was once more at his mercy.

The woman now slowly withdrew from the bold yeomen; and while they continued to pass the bottle from one to another, each doing his best not to be outdone by his comrade, she seated herself with her back against the wall.

"She's as mad as a March hare," remarked Saunders to the sentinel, after perhaps his fourth mouthful.

"Hu, hu! it's wicked sthrong," replied the other, shaking his head, "a sign it's the right sort; but she was your match, Saundhers, above all I ever seen."

"Do you think I'd go cut down a woman, Tom? No, if she was to give me a gash a foot deep. It's mortial sthrong, sure enough, by the great Saizor."

"Famous stuff of a dark night," answered Tom, stretching his hand for the bottle. It was indeed his turn; Saunders, however, cheated him of a gulp, ere he would relinquish it.

"Au—hau!—a dhrowsy thing to be stayin' awake all night long," digressed Tom; "I wish ould Nick had all the Croppies in Waxford, that keeps us out of our beds, in this sort,—au—hau!"

Yawning, as is well known, is epidemic; and the hideous extension of Tom's jaws was followed by that of Saunders Smyly's.

"Hau—u! I didn't sleep what may be called a wink these three weeks, good," said Saunders.

"I'd give a shillin' for a good snore," added Tom, in wavering accents; and he almost instantly had his wish gratis.

"I'd sleep for a month, I think—by—the—left-thigh—" and Saunders slipped down beside his comrade; and after a few incoherent words, which died away in vague sound, they were both enjoying the blessing they had so recently and loudly lauded.

The woman had awaited the effect of her portion. Now she arose, and, stepping lightly to the watchful guardians of the castle, soon disencumbered Saunders of his keys, and hastened to despatch the business, for the execution of which she had, as we have seen, ingeniously introduced herself into the temporary prison.

Sir William Judkin, dragged from the arms of the fairest creature in the County of Wexford, at the very moment he could call her his own, felt less at his individual disappointment—great as that was—and at the prospect of facing a court-martial, than he did at the recollection of his mistress and wife left alone to abide

the machinations of an abhorred rival. Charges of disloyalty, whatever might be his real sentiments toward King and Government, he knew, could not possibly be made good against him; and confident of an acquittal, and maddened by his private feelings, the young Baronet loudly clamoured for the trial that must leave him free again to rush to his unprotected bride. But it was not deemed expedient yet to meet his wishes; and, in consequence of continued clamour, he was removed from the large apartment, in which, with many other suspected persons, he had first been locked up, to a small round chamber in the eastern turret of the castle, and there left to his own reflections.

The two towers, to the right and to the left of the old edifice, gave admission, by winding stairs, into the stories of the main pile; but to three apartments, one above the other, in the lesser tower, entrance was gained from those stories. And the ground apartment of the three mentioned, having a floor of mason-work, a small and strong door, unplastered walls, and one or two slits in lieu of windows, was the dungeon, upon his wedding-day, of the young, the high-born, the titled, the gay, and handsome Sir William Judkin.

Saunders Smyly, as well for the purpose of exercising his new function of locking and unlocking doors, as of plaguing his prisoner with accounts of what was doing in the castle, had occasionally visited him during the day; and from Saunders the young Baronet became acquainted, at intervals, with the progress of his father-in-law's trial, with his condemnation, and finally with his death. And Saunders anticipated the same fate for his ward;—because, as he informed him, a servant of his had been taken prisoner, after a recent skirmish, with a pike in his hand, and—"

"A servant of mine?" interrupted Sir William, starting up—"what is his name?"

"Brown is his name," answered Saunders.

"Ha! Brown! Gracious God! Then I am in peril indeed if—has any one been with him to urge him to give information?"

"Yes!" Saunders answered; "Captain Talbot had been with him; and from the long conversation they enjoyed together, it was pretty plain they understood each other."

"Talbot!" muttered the Baronet—"Talbot! the very fiend of my hopes and fate!—and this the very danger I apprehended!" And Saunders Smyly could see that, for the first time, his prisoner trembled and looked terrified.

This was the yeoman-turnkey's last visit to the turret, previous to the entrance of the strange woman into his fortress. When, shaking his head, and smiling at the certain evidence of Croppyism implied by the agitation he had watched, Saunders closed the door on Sir William, the young man sank upon the crazy chair which had been vouchsafed to his rank as a prisoner, his head

drooped towards his breast, his arms fell listlessly by his sides, and, for some time, a succession of tremendous feelings and passions battled in his bosom, and shook and tamed his muscular frame.

Once more the key grated in the lock of his prison-door, and in utter disgust and weariness of Saunders Smyly, who, he supposed, would re-enter, he shifted his position, and turned his face to the wall.

But the sound of the step, that came over the threshold so quick at once, and so light, first told him that it was not the striding trooper who now entered. The breathings of the unexpected visitant next startled him; and swinging round on his creaking chair, he saw, with staring eyes and chattering teeth, a face which, from its composed expression and its ashy hue, fully visible in the glare of a taper the figure carried, he believed, was the face of an inhabitant of the grave.

"Who are you?" he hoarsely whispered, after he and this apparition had for about the space of half a minute deeply regarded each other.

"I am your genius!" he was answered, in a tone which, if spirits speak, belied not his romantic conclusions:—"I am your genius; you are under my guardianship;—arise! I come to deliver you from prison."

"Is such a thing"—sir William continued, evidently questioning his own mind, while he withdrew not his fixed gaze—"is such a thing within the bounds of possibility?" And he started wildly again, as the same voice—so hollow, so empty, it seemed the echo of a voice—replied to his random question.

"Yes! it is possible; it is probable; it is certain, true,—I am a being of the tomb; obey the command I have over you: arise, Sir William Judkin!"

Whether the result of phantasy, or in accordance with a previously arranged plan, her person was arrayed so as to produce supernatural effect. Her face, as before noticed, pale, vaguely pale, and expressing no feeling, no purpose even, though she spoke of one, well imaged our notion of the passionless animation of the dead.

"Arise, I say, and follow me from your prison," she continued, after a thrilling pause, during which the young man seemed engaged in incoherently considering the last words she had uttered; for he had pressed his hand over his eyes, as if either to shut out the object that fascinated them, or else to assure himself that they did not cheat him with the delusion of a waking dream; and a moment after they again encountered that motionless figure and unchanged visage, their former gaze of chilled amazement changed into one of flaming excitement.

"From prison, you say?—you are come to free me from prison?"

"Yes! follow me to liberty!"

"Lead the way, then, though you be sent from hell!" he started fiercely to his feet.

The female flitted before him, as if she indeed were a disembodied spirit, giving scarce an idea of sound or motion. They rapidly traversed some desolate apartments of the main building. They gained the hall. Its watchful guardians were still sunk in the deep sleep in which we left them. Sir William, as he passed them, stooped, unseen by his conductor, for a large pistol, which had fallen from the sentinel, Tom, and hid it in his breast. Saunders Smyly's sabre also had dropped from the gallant grasp of its owner, and this too he seized. The door of the hall was now flung open, as if by magic, for his egress;—but before she issued forth, the guide turned and faced her follower.

"Throw down the sword!" she said, pointing towards the ground, and assuming a tone and manner of the most absolute authority.

"Command me no longer!—but lead onward if you will;" answered Sir William, with determined defiance.

"Cast the sword from your hand!" she repeated, standing full in the doorway, and so blocking up all exit, save by a decisive and rude contact with her person.

But no puny terrors could unnerve the man who had thus far followed her. She darted forward; he waved his weapon; she stirred not; he aimed at her a stroke that, if it had told, must have proved whether or not she was flesh and blood; but the taper she held became extinguished and in utter darkness, for the hall-sconce had burnt out. She evaded his cut. The door, however, was still open, and gave an unobstructed view of the less positive gloom abroad. Sir William sprang through it. There was a slight scream as he passed the threshold, and a shot rung close behind him, and he heard, almost felt, the whiz of the ball by his cheek; still he was unhurt, and still onward he bounded. The single sentinel at the outward gate soon yielded to his impetuous and furious attack; he gained the streets of Enniscorthy; the shout of alarm arose at his heels. A yeoman was leading a horse along; he forced the animal from him, jumped into the saddle, swept like the whirlwind through the little town, and, in less than an hour, pulled up before the house where that morning he had received the hand of Eliza Hartley.

CHAPTER IV.

The liberated bridegroom pulled up before Hartley Court, vaulted from his saddle, and allowed the reeking horse to take his own course over the lawn; yet, furious as had been his wishes and his speed to enter as well as to gain the house of hope, he did not at once approach the hall-door. After measuring the old mansion with one glance, as if to assure himself of its identity and proximity, he leaned his back against a tree, and while his left hand touched the hilt of the pistol he had hidden in his bosom, and the other still grasped Saunders Smyly's sword, the young Baronet's brow fell blacker than the starless night above him, and his teeth grated against each other,—the clenched jaws moving backward and forward to the disagreeable sound.

At intervals there came muttered words from his parched lips. "I may—I may have the chance first! Ere I lie at his feet, he may writhe at mine! Curses on me that I have hitherto avoided him! That I should be held back by man—or by woman either—even by Eliza Hartley! Ay! ay! I see it plainly—he has his trammels around me! This night it must be—or she is lost to me for ever! Lost, as I am lost! That traitor-villain, Brown!—O that he stood at arm's length before me!"—and, springing to action, he made a furious thrust at another tree near him.

"But, come! mine this night she *is!* There, at least, I fail him! Mine this night she is! though in despair and revenge, as much as in love, I woo her to our marriage-bed: and though dark be the forms that hover round it—grief, terror, death,—unfitting inmates of a bridal chamber!—beloved! I come, I come! I come, alone and unattended—through danger and darkness—from scenes of fear and horror—I come to claim my bride! Silent and dull is the house of love—" he again regarded it, more steadily than before—"its black windows emitting no festive light—no laugh and no mirthful measure responding within its walls to the throb of the bridegroom's heart—no voice welcoming him but the howl of the nightdog, who wails, perhaps, the eternal absence of his old master—yet thus I come, beloved, I come!" He bounded to the hall-door, in a state of mind which, as may be concluded from his words, bordered upon insanity, and, seizing the massive knocker, rang a loud peal. Nothing answered him but the reverberation of the sound,—first through the edifice, then echoed from a distance

behind him. In frantic misgiving he repeated his summons, and again echo only replied to it.

"Hah! not here! torn from me! so soon! this moment in his grasp, perhaps! his poisoned tales whispered in her ear! No, no,—it cannot, must not be! Madness—hell is in the thought!—open, wretches open!" He once more gave his voice challenge. "Yield, then, churlish door!" He rushed against it with frantic force; but only recoiled, and fell from the shock. He tried the windows, shattering their glass to get at the shutters within; even these were too strongly barricadoed to yield to his arm. He hastened to walk round the mansion. Through a small back-window, he thought he perceived a ray of light; but as he raced nearer, either his eyes had deceived him, or it had become extinguished. The shutters of this casement closed on the outside; he tugged at them, they gave way; and, unconscious of the laceration he received from the shivered glass, Sir William at last stood in treble darkness, under the roof of Hartley Court.

Extending his arms, he groped about. It was a small bedroom he found himself in, evidently belonging to one of the servants. He felt over the bed—it was empty. Shouting out the name of Eliza, and alternately the names of such of the servants as he could remember, he groped to an open door, got into a passage; thence, he concluded, into the kitchen; and thence, into the hall. Here he paused an instant. All was still, dark, and silent; it seemed that no living creature could be with himself under the unhappy roof. He continued his way up-stairs to the drawing-room;—to his wife's dressing-room—and, ere he gained its door, how did he pray he might find it locked! But, no,—like all the others within the house, it stood desolately open. And so did her chamber-door; and vainly the bridegroom repeated, at the threshold, the name of his bride.

Unable to reflect farther than by a recurrence to the conviction that his wife was within his rival's grasp, he sprung down-stairs, and again reached the hall, with resolution to return, even in the face of death, to seek her. Impetuously, and therefore with little chance of success, he was seeking the fastenings of the door, when a soft and cautious voice, not far from him, said—

"Ah, then, the Heavens look wid an eye o' compassion on you, this black night, for one poor gentleman!"

"What—what—who is there?" questioned Sir William, turning quickly round in the direction of the voice.

"An' it's nobody is in id bud poor ould Nanny, your honour, my honey."

"Where is Lady Eliza?"

"That's her poor, purty honour, Lady Elizabeth Judkin, barrowknight, you're axin for, my pet?"

"Yes, yes! answer quickly—where is she?"

"Ah, an' who's to blame you for axin afther the darlin' crature iv a lady; good loock to her, is my prayer. Ochone! an' sure it's she is i-want o' the marciful marcy o' Heaven, this night!"

Although this speech was, according to the ever quick gabbling habits of Nanny's tongue, pronounced in a very short space of time; yet, in his present mood, the intervention only of good wishes and prayers, instead of the direct answer he reckoned on, maddened the young Baronet.

"Speak to my question, you wretched old hag!" he said, stamping on the marble hall, till its roof rang again.

"You're cross wid me, your honour, my pet, bud, och, that I may't'nt sin, bud then that 'ud fault you for bein' cross an' fraptious, 'ud not be them that 'ud remember the rasons you have for id."

"Answer me, or I'll destroy you!" He bounded towards the spot whence the voice came, but Nanny evaded his gripe; and, like a duck popping up her head after she has dived in a place where one least expects her, the old woman now spoke from behind his back.

"Why, your poor honour, my honey, if it's a thing that Miss Eliza that was, and Lady Eleezabeth that is, isn't afther you in Enniscorthytown, as I'm a sinner afore Heaven, blessed be the holy name, I don't know from Adam what's come over her."

"In Enniscorthy! what does she there?"

"Och, an' hasn't your honour the knowledge, that the poor honey iv a lady dhruv afther you an' the darlin' father, that was there, God be good to his poor sowl, Amin!"

"Eternal curses!" he muttered—"and has not since returned?"

"The niver a bit of her or Miss Alice come next or near this sorrowful-of-all-sorrowful houses, my pet, since the moment they dhruv off, afther them they loved in their hearts widin was dhragged away forment her hansome eyes; an' them eyes rowlin out tears that run down her purty cheeks like the rain from the goose's back."

With quick and irregular strides, Sir William paced about the hall, involuntarily answering to the impulse of that impatient emotion which prompts even the muscles of our body to spurn at rest. The light of a taper gradually beamed upon him, and, down the passage that led to the servants' apartments, he saw the aged butler, accompanied by Nanny the Knitter, and followed by a very old woman, also a servant, approach him. Nanny, during the Baron's taciturn fit, had slipped off to summon their attendance. He stopped and stared at them as they advanced. They also stood still, regarding him.

"Won't your honour," began the old man, but his voice failed him; his features struggled, and his limbs tottered with strong

emotion, and tears burst from his eyes. It was some time before he could express himself farther; while his old companion wrung her hands and wept loudly, and the Knitter, with low moans, swayed her body to and fro.

"This is a sorrowful night, Sir William," he said at length—the most sorrowful that ever darkened upon me; an' my ould eyes ar'n't able to keep from cryin' like any woman; I'd choke if I couldn't cry."

"Where in Enniscorthy shall I find your young lady, Martin?" was the question in reply to his lament.

"Won't your honour walk up-stairs? them that used to be above are not above? but—"

He held the taper at the bottom of the stairs. Sir William, without an observation, sprang up; and when, at a slower pace, the others followed, they found him pacing about the drawing-room, as he had done in the hall. At their entrance, he flung himself in a chair, leaned his elbows on a table, and covered his face with his hands; thus preparing to attend to the expected account of the sobbing domestic, which it now appeared necessary for him to hear, in order that he might draw from it, if possible, some plan of action. And, governed by this impression, Sir William remained very patient, allowing for his state of mind, to a narrative almost necessarily broken and unsatisfactory; and taken up in turn, though not as necessarily, by Nanny and the other old woman. When the butler spoke, indeed, he only once or twice showed symptoms of restlessness; but the statement devolving to the Knitter, and while she thought to indulge (on her hunkers too) her usual verbosity, he slowly raised his head, looked ferociously at her, and with a round oath swore, that "if she did not avoid her useless gabble, and confine herself to facts expressed in a few words, he was just in the humour to seize on her, neck and heels, and fling her out at the window." And Nanny afterwards mentioned, that if ever look and tone of voice accorded with a terrible threat, Sir William's look and tone tallied at the moment with this menace; and she would add, that "as sure as she was a lump iv a sinner, afore Heaven, blessed be the holy name, she couldn't b'lieve her own two eyes, all out, it was the same face that she saw on the showldhers o' the hansome young barrowknight, the day mornin' when he was goin' to marry himself to the poor, purty pet, Miss Eliza;" and "might she never sin," but she thought, while he was looking at her, that she described a descent to the earth, "heels uppermost."

But all the Baronet heard may thus be briefly noted. His bride, having put off her wedding attire, had set out in the carriage, accompanied by her aunt, to Enniscorthy, about an hour after his and her father's departure, and, as Nanny first truly related in the

hall, had not since reappeared nor been heard of. To other matters of less interest he lent an ear.

During the course of the day, yeomen had arrived at Hartley Court, and seized on all the papers to be found in Sir Thomas's study.

The servants, in obedience to an intimation from their master, had repaired to Enniscorthy castle to give evidence in his favour, respecting the visit of the insurgents to the house; but, as before noticed, though Sir William now for the first time became acquainted with the fact, Captain Talbot met them at the gate and refused them ingress. The old butler, amongst the others, had thus been repulsed; and he described Talbot's conduct as ferocious. In explanation of the demur to open the door to the Baronet's loud knocking, he learned that, while the yeomen had been employed in collecting Sir Thomas's papers, Nanny, according to her usual habit of observing, quietly and cunningly, every thing and every body she could, overheard them allude, in whispers, to the valuables which during their search had come under their eyes; and their admiration particularly of certain articles of plate, seemed to her more ardent than might consistently be manifested towards the property of a traitor. So soon as opportunity offered, her suspicions were hinted to the butler; and, having first barricadoed the house, both set to work, late in the evening, to hide in a distant and obscure cellar, beyond the wine vaults, whatever they supposed an object of temptation to a covetous visiter. And there were they occupied when Sir William so loudly knocked at the doors; and, concluding that his was the summons of the dreaded invaders, all crept, like frightened mice, into the mysteries of these subterraneous apartments; though, after a pause, Nanny, presuming on her capacity of "goin' about without makin' much noise," ventured forth, couched herself in a corner of the hall, and there recognizing Sir William's shouting accents, addressed him as has been related.

After the last piece of information which could be afforded had reached the Baronet's ear, he still remained in the position he had at first taken, in order to attend to his humble friends: and as he was silent, they too held silence, even Nanny the Knitter, along with the butler and the old woman-servant: respect and pity governing exclusively their tongues; fear, as well as more generous sentiments, her's. And he seemed, indeed, an object of extreme compassion, both on account of their knowledge of his excessive grief, as on account of his present expression of his feelings; for, while his hands yet covered his face, deep groanings, which he would fain have struggled to keep in, often escaped him, and the workings of his frame shook the table on which he leaned.

But suddenly he sprang up, and "Saddle me a horse!" he cried

to the old butler; "begone, Martin, without a question or a word; and you too, woman, leave the room."

The aged servant, as his female companion and the gossip ducked and huddled away, bowed low, and withdrew to obey the commands of his young lady's husband. But the old man, with his feeble pace, had scarce reached the stables, when Sir William Judkin, bearing the light from the room, was there also. This he dashed against the ground; and, expressing much displeasure at the tardiness of his amazed attendant, proceeded to saddle with his own hand a stout hunter, once the favourite of his father-in-law; mounted precipitately, and was seen beyond the avenue-gate.

The summer morning, mild and lovely, and ushered in by a breeze of softest breathing, which however was sufficient to roll away the black clouds of the previous night, had just begun to redden in the East, as Sir William turned, galloping furiously, into the high road to Enniscorthy. The day-break, the scenery it just indicated, the fresh rush of river and brook, the waking carol of the thrush,—all was delightful, and wooed human interest and admiration; but it drew from the young man no smile of pleasure, none even of sympathising hope, though the heart that closes in sleep and despair, at once, beneath the brooding night, will naturally and fitly own the dawn of some blessed hope in such a morning. In truth, the rapid traveller saw nothing, could see nothing save the troubled images presented by his own mind; and his brain was as full and as feverish, as it had been under the clouds of midnight.

He had spurred half the distance to Enniscorthy, when, at a point where a *bosheen*, or bridle-road, entered upon the main one, many voices suddenly assailed him with cries of "Stop! stop!—and, almost at the same instant, his bridle was seized, and a tumultuous crowd surrounded him.

His first motion was to snatch at the pistol in his bosom,—he had left his sword behind; but before he drew it out, one observant glance at his detainers informed him that, when they should become aware whom they had in their hands, they were not the description of persons from whom he might apprehend opposition in his course, or injury in life or limb. He had encountered, in fact, a formidable throng of insurgents, some mounted, but the greater number on foot, shouldering their tall pikes, and marching, or more properly hurrying and huddling on, while their women and children mixed promiscuously among them, compelled, as in all the ravages in the South was the case, by the burning of their cabins, or the terrors of staying unprotected, at home, to share the fortunes, often in the very field of strife, of their husbands, fathers, and brothers.

"Stop me not, good friends!" cried Sir William, the instant he had made his observation. "I am the son-in-law of Sir Thomas

Hartley, who has met death in your cause; your enemies are my enemies; stop me not! I am for life or death!"

"Indeed? Sir William Judkin," questioned one of the foremost of the horsemen.

"Yes, and, if I do not mistake, I answer Mr. Rourke."

"And that you do, my worthy friend; but who could hope to meet you at large? We heard you were a prisoner in Enniscorthy castle, and expected no less than an account of your elevation to the gallows this morning."

"I escaped by a singular chance, Mr. Rourke; but do not now detain me; I have business of importance in Enniscorthy, which must be despatched before the morning brightens."

"Business of importance? how can that be? If you've escaped from the prison, out of which your worthy father-in-law has been led to his murder, what business can you have with any of his murderers?"

"My wife is in the town, in the power of my enemies and her's; I am spurring singly to brave them, and rescue her or fall in the attempt."

"Does your head go right, man?"

"Scarcely, scarcely; but this must be attempted."

"Why, your servant, who is in custody in the town, has informed against you as a Croppy."

"Ay, sir!" exclaimed Sir William; "accused me of disloyalty?" and he stopped and gazed intently forward, as if pursuing a sudden thought to its goal.—"The traitor rascal!" he continued, in less agitation, "but if I can reach him, he will meet his deserts. Tell me, tell me, Mr. Rourke, can you, will you, befriend me, and let me try to serve you?"

"Speak your wishes, Sir William."

"Give me a band of brave fellows, and I will storm and win Enniscorthy for your cause."

"Your hand upon it, Sir William: by the life! here we are, a reinforcement proceeding to join the main body assembled with that very intent; and glad we will be to have a dashing young fellow, like yourself, engaged in the affair."

"I am with you then," replied the desperate man, with an air of thoughtless determination, as if he but grasped at the most palpable means of rescuing his mistress and bride: and when his resolution was announced by the priest, the shout which escaped the disorderly throng, now once more in motion, told the great value they attached to the acquisition they had made.

"How proceeds our cause, Mr. Rourke? I have heard little or nothing about it," said the Baronet, as they continued their march.

"Two considerable bodies of Wexford patriots have assembled," answered the clerical soldier.

"Where? in what positions?"

"Upon two of the many rocky and barren eminences which form remarkable features of our county, whence they can view the approach of an enemy at a good distance, and, in case of attack, have some advantage of ground: a good plan, by the life! and one we would all do well to keep in view;—and they call their positions camps, Sir William, though, to tell the blessed truth, little resembling the military station so denominated; for the poor fellows spend day and night on those hills, with no covering but the canopy of heaven: to be sure, the weather is as fine and as favourable as if it came to them upon the prayers of the whole church."

"But are your two divisions quite inactive?"

"No, God forbid! they sally down, and run about the country, whenever it's quite convanient, taking some revenge, at last, upon whatever Orange house comes in the way; at the same time that the Orange yeomen are burning their desolate cabins, or shooting or bayoneting on the hearth-stones, or by the road-side, such timid friends as have not turned out with the main bodies, or such old men as were not able to turn out; so that, by the life! it's tit for tat between 'em."

"But surely this is a very petty and undecisive mode of warfare?"

"There's something else along with it. One of the armies I spoke of, is posted on the principal eminence in the county, about twelve miles north-east of Enniscorthy town; the other on the hill of Owlard, four miles to its east. Yesterday morning, the first position I'm telling you of, was approached by a force of yeomen cavalry; and as the poor boys cannot yet be called much better than a mob, in point of discipline, they yielded to the terror armed horsemen always produce amongst a mob, and, not even waiting to be attacked, ran away in all directions."

"You now certainly mention an affair of some importance, Mr. Rourke, but one not much to your credit."

"No, indeed. And, to mend the matter, the victorious yeomen, about as victorious over the real strength of the Wexford Army of Freedom, as was the big *bosthoon* of a Roman emperor, who said he had conquered old Britain, when he ordered his soldiers to stuff their pockets with the shells on the beach; the victorious yeomen, on their way home to their quarters, set fire to about one hundred Catholic dwellings; and, as if to convince us all of the uselessness of temporising, shot every straggler, wearing a peasant's coat, who came within their view, or within their skill, with their pistol or carbine."

"A disheartening story, in the very opening of our campaign, Mr. Rourke."

"We'll get more used to the thing, by the life! in time, and pull up our losses; though you will remark, that in this affair there was

no loss at all, barring a little of character; and then you see, Sir William, there's something has happened on Owlard hill to throw into the scale against it."

"Ay? we have done better there?"

"I'll tell you. A second yeoman-cavalry force marched against our second army, occupying that ground; but when they got close enough to reconnoitre, they seemed to think it was better to let Owlard hill alone; and so they wheeled to the right-about, and marched back again."

"Why, this is but another piece of pusillanimity, by which we gain little."

"Sure enough, particularly as our own men, like their comrades in the other position I spoke of, were in the very act of scampering before the terrible horse-soldiers, when the terrible horse-soldiers trotted home, afraid of them, by the life!"

"Absurd faint-heartedness on both sides."

"Yes, indeed; but something else happened almost at the same moment, on that same rocky hill of Owlard. Without either party knowing the intentions of the other, a detachment of infantry-militia was advancing to the eminence, by a different route, just as the bould cavalry were retreating from it. Our men, flying over the hill from the first enemy, saw the second enemy drawn out before them on the plains below, only stopping to gather breath before they charged up. The poor boys also stopped, and suddenly took heart to try their pikes against certainly the most formidable foe of the two. A stratagem was devised. Such as had not yet cleared the top of the hill, threw themselves into a circular ditch, that some good body, without knowing how much good he was doing, had formed as an enclosure: the rest, who had got half-way down, fled back, and disappeared over the summit. The soldiers, imagining the enemy had all retreated before them, advanced upward. Before you could say "Jack Robinson," they were welcomed with hearty shouts and wicked weapons; and in a few minutes more, the whole of them, barring the officer second in command, a serjeant, and a poor drummer, who yet lives to make a noise in the world, were piked in a heap."

"Good, Mr. Rourke; this little success will give us some of the confidence we certainly stood in need of."

"By the life! yes; though as yet it has not given enough to enable us to decide on the attack of Enniscorthy, and the town lying so handy, only a few miles off."

"What have the victors since done?"

"First, a great deal of damage among the Orangemen, and the Orange houses, within their reach; then they quitted Owlard, and encamped, as we call it, on another height, eight miles farther northward, where they were joined by the runaways from the first body of mounted cavalry, and from this position they marched on

a village, convanient to them, and captured some arms and ammunition, by the life! and thence on Ferns, which also fell into their hands: and such as had caught horses on the route might be seen transforming the large tomes borrowed out of the poor lord bishop's library, into saddles, as it were, for their nags; and, as they kept moving—no one to bid them stop—southward along the Slaney, crossed the river within four miles of Enniscorthy, proceeded to one of their favourite eminences, two miles north-west of that good town; and, in hopes they may at last venture to pay it a visit, it's to reinforce the main army of ours we are now marching, Sir William."

"They must, indeed, have hitherto been very cautious of taking this necessary step, Mr. Rourke; when, according to your account, they have traversed, from their first position to their last one, a circuit of more than twenty miles to arrive at the point, which, after their success against the militia, they might have gained in an hour's marching."

"No doubt, no doubt, cautious they were: attacking a town seemed such an awful thing to them; but their continued successes, trifling as they are, and the arms and ammunition picked up on their unobstructed march of observation, at last give them, let us hope, a better opinion of themselves; and their present encampment surely means that Enniscorthy is to be our's this blessed day."

Whilst Father Rourke yet spake, he and his reinforcement came within view and hail of the main force he was discoursing about; and loud and long were the shouts of greeting and welcome exchanged between the victorious insurgents on the height, and the admiring and ardent friends who approached to add numbers and confidence to their body. Thousands of hats, raised high on pikes, also waved a welcome to Father Rourke's band.

The title of Army, as the term is generally used, could not properly be given to the mass of armed men who crowded the hill of Ballyorvil, preparing for the attack of Enniscorthy. As Sir William joined them, their leaders were employed, by entreaties, by threats, by curses, by shoutings, and by main force, in arranging the unruly throng into some disposition for march and battle. Of their leaders, the generality belonged to the middle class of farmers, and had been dubbed, or had dubbed themselves, with the military titles of General, Colonel, or Captain, according as the esteem or consideration in which they were held operated upon the opinions of the multitude. By force of the predominance which superior intellect, or courage, or daring, never fails to afford, bold spirits had already raised themselves above their compeers; and men whose former characters had stood well for bravery and sagacity, here found their claims admitted and rewarded. But as these various leaders, of few degrees in grade—for no one would answer

to a less sounding title than that of Captain—endeavoured, as has been mentioned, to raise their tones of command above the general clamour of voices, in which the shrill screams of women and children took no inconsiderable part; as they shouted, and pulled, and dragged those whom they considered under their command to the positions they decreed should be taken up: it was easy to perceive that their martial titles were little more than nominal; that the insubordinate throng might follow their leader in conflict, or gain spirit from the boldness of his example, but would allow him, meantime, no more superiority, and pay him no more deference, than is conceded by a mob to its ringleader.

To the front of what may be called the centre of his self-willed force, were collected all such as bore fire-arms; and they might amount to eight hundred men. Some shouldered the muskets they had wrested from the soldiers on Owlard hill, and also wore the cross-belts and pouches of that ill-fated detachment; others bore muskets, too, found in the first village they had, as Mr. Rourke described, conquered on their roundabout and wavering march; others clutched guns of every kind and calibre, plundered from houses, or drawn from places of long concealment to grace this anticipated day. But, distinguished amongst "the gunsmen," as they were termed, stood the hardy inhabitants of the eastern sea-coast beyond the town of Wexford, carrying very long fire-locks, used by them in shooting water-fowl. This little band was famed as the best marksmen of the force; its sharp-shooter's company, as it were, of a very unusual kind: and, indeed, the men were well used to the enormous guns they bore; and quite as proud of the consideration they justly enjoyed amongst a throng, of whom the greater number did not know how to charge their pieces. They were particularized by the title of Shelmaliers, the name of the barony whence the first of such valued "guns" came to join the insurgents; and when afterwards reinforced by all who grew expert in the use of the trigger, they became still more distinguished for their real good services during the memorable campaign. At their sides hung portions of cows' horns, to hold their powder and ball; and these were other marks of superiority; for, excepting the few hundreds who ostentatiously displayed the pouches of the military they had slain, the greater number of the "gunsmen" carried their scanty supplies of ammunition in morsels of paper, or in old rags, thrust inconveniently into the depths of their pockets.

Behind "the gunsmen" arose a wood of long pikes, roughly fashioned from the anvil, without polished surface from which to reflect the sunbeams, or to cast the glitter of chivalry around the infliction of death. Black and rude, they seemed, indeed, fit instruments of that species of warfare—civil strife—in which chivalrous feeling, as well as chivalrous display, seldom finds a

place. At each wing, a dense mass of men, bearing the same savage weapon, supported the centre.

For the most part, those who were styled Commanders, had contrived, like poor little Peter Rooney, to fasten to their persons some ill-fashioned appendage of a green colour;—materials for this purpose had been eagerly snatched at wherever they appeared, during the late march,—and some displayed a broad green sash, some a green silk handkerchief bound round their arms, some a green cockade, or hatband. But the general crowd remained in their usual costume, except that many had doffed their brogues, stockings, or coats, as too cumbrous to be borne into action upon a broiling summer-day. Flags of any green stuff that could be procured, uncouthly shaped, and clumsily attached to rough poles, appeared, at irregular distances, among the black and frowning masses of pike-heads; and sometimes their bearers waved them to and fro, and then there arose shouts of admiration as well as zeal, —for their unmottoed and unemblazoned banners seemed a great stride towards military organization and character.

While the leaders essayed, in the manner described, to get their companies into marching order, a crowd of unarmed men, and of women and children, were hallooing together a great drove of cows and oxen; of which the Irish insurgents of 1798 made somewhat the same use as did the Carthaginian general, two thousand years before. In fact, the cattle were pushed in front of the whole body, with the intent of driving them, in order to create confusion, into the ranks of the enemy: and as soon as this curious advance had been formed, the insurgent force, shouting furiously and deafeningly, rushed down the hill, and poured into the road which led to the town.

As a feature of the times, some mention may here be expected of the few Roman Catholic clergymen of the County of Wexford who, like Father Rourke, had distinguished command in this undisciplined concourse; deriving sway, as well from the usual legitimate claims of bravery or station, as from a very general belief that, along with the blessing of charmed persons, which bullet, bayonet, or cannon-ball could not hurt or harm, they held in their hands the scales of defeat or victory.

One, a stoutly made, swarthy man of middle age, joined, or, it is said, led forth the first small band who raised the cry of insurrection. He is described as a fanatical person, acting only from the goad of his aroused feelings, and regarding that as a good cause, which alone seemed to promise safety to himself and his terrified flock, and predominance to a religion he fancied he was born to spread far and wide. And this individual, either because he had originated "the rising," or that his views came nearest to those of the multitude, ranked, on the present occasion, as chief commander. He rode with his colleagues, in front (after the drove

of cattle) of the tumultuous concourse; a long rusty sword dangling awkwardly round his legs, and as rusty a pistol swinging by a cord from the pummel of his saddle.

Another reverend captain was a man of weak and shallow intellect, whose junction with the insurgents resulted from mere momentary impulse, when he found his chapel burnt down by a zealous band of Orange yeomen.

With Father General Rourke the reader is already acquainted. As he strode before his chosen band, now disdaining a horse, with his pike for a walking-staff, he seemed, although his rusty black suit was bad attire for a military leader, exactly occupying the place nature had intended him to fill. There was yet another clergyman, of giant stature, who, it is said, when he flung off his sacerdotal character, relapsed into a nature of great original ferocity. But we must continue our narrative.

CHAPTER V.

It was after the hour of noon, upon, as has been intimated, a sultry summer day, that the first formidable insurgent throng of the County of Wexford, still preceded by their advance of horned cattle, set forward, shouting until, as Pistol would say, "the welkin rang," to attack the town of Enniscorthy. They were followed, in numbers nearly equal to their own, by the clamorous women and children, many bearing the pikes of father, of husband, of brother, or of some other relative, to be handed to the insurgent soldier after he had expended his fire-arm's ammunition, or even after his first musket-shot, if chance led him to close action: and it was regularly stipulated that his weapon-bearer should always be at hand, prepared to effect the necessary change of arms.

At four o'clock, the town was in possession of the insurgents. Its garrison, of about three hundred men, gallantly defended themselves for more than three hours against the furious but irregular attacks of their untutored assailants.

The greater portion of Enniscorthy, or at least the more important portion, lies in a hollow; its thatched suburbs run up ascents that at every side inclose it; and these had been fired by the destroying assaulters, while they contended for entrance into the better quarter of the town. They at last possessed themselves of that quarter; and we would speak of the ensuing half-hour, during which

the majority of the shrieking inhabitants—the young, the old—the wealthy, the needy—beauty and deformity, flew pell-mell, with the retreating garrison, through scorching flames, along the scarce less scorching and dusty road, to the capital of the county, the important town of Wexford. Hundreds of burning dwellings sent masses of fire to surcharge the already sultry atmosphere; until, in the lower streets of Enniscorthy, overhung by clouds of smoke, and strewed with hot ashes, respiration became painful, and exertion difficult. And through the dense vapour, and through the glowing air, pealed the triumphant and deafening shouts of the ferocious visiters, as, trampling indifferently the heaped bodies of comrades and foes, they rushed on, at every side, to plunder the abandoned houses, and pour into their parched throats whatever liquor they could seize upon;—some wastefully and wantonly destroying property that they could not appropriate; others loading their attendant females with portable articles of value; and others giving cause for the unheeded cry of supplication, distinctly heard amid the whoop of rude triumph, while they dragged trembling wretches from places of concealment, to be piked in the streets, already too deeply stained with blood.

All was shout, shriek, and clamour below; and overhead roared the ravenous flames; when, amid the hellish din and its accompaniments, Sir William Judkin, not an undistinguished leader in that day's battle, stood before the inner or entrance-gate of the castle of Enniscorthy.

Through every dungeon slit and window were presented the anxious faces of the prisoners, who, abandoned by their guards and turnkeys—Saunders Smyly amongst the foremost—yet had been left too well locked and bolted in to allow of their emancipating themselves from durance. Sir William scanned over with inquiring eye the countenances that appeared, and at length his glance fixed ominously upon one?

"Two blows more, and it yields," he cried to Shawn-a-Gow, who, wielding a great sledge, battered at the ponderous door;—"quick! quick! I see him."

The two prescribed blows followed, and door and lock and bolt gave way in shivers. There was a wild shout within, and then a rush of the enfranchised captives, some hastening to enrol themselves, in revenge against their enemies, amongst the victorious insurgents; others to indulge in the general licentiousness. The pale-faced wretch upon whom Sir William had bent his fateful glance, came forward. On the threshold he started back, and, hastily pulling his hat over his brows, sought to mingle unobserved with the general throng. But the watchful eye of the tiger instantly marked him out, and as instantly the grasp of his former master was on his collar. The terrified man seemed confounded into nonentity.

"This is the fellow—this is Brown," said Sir William, addressing Shawn-a-Gow—"this is the Orange-traitor and informer!"

"Pitch him to us!" growled the stern smith.

"Oh, master, master! only listen to me!"—gasped the victim, vainly endeavouring to sink upon his knees; but the strong arm of his indignant master upheld him; and then, swinging him round, he flung him towards Shawn-a-Gow, and he was dead ere he fell to the ground—four pikes had entered his cringing body.

"Could iron is informer's hire," remarked the father of Tom Delouchery; as he withdrew his reeking weapon; and he and his fellow-executioners hastily departed to rejoin the unbridled rioting, of which the fierce shouts reached them from every quarter, and which they had only left in obedience to the requests of so important a leader as the young Baronet.

"And this done," soliloquized Sir William, as, left alone with the corse of his former servant, he wiped his brow from the soil of moisture, of dust, and of blood,—"this done—this villain punished—still I must speed to seek my wife."

His horse stood near; and, actively and hastily mounting, he made his way, with as much speed as the intervening throngs would allow, to an inn at which he heard Eliza Hartley and her aunt had put up the previous night. Here additional excitement to his already exasperated mood awaited him. The inn had been invaded by an unbridled crowd of riotous insurgents; and, as he heard them shouting forth their clamours and threats for liquor, and heavily clattering from room to room, and banging doors and breaking windows, obviously to exercise their newly acquired privilege of doing what they liked in a situation they had once never dreamt of attaining, the alarmed husband naturally shuddered at the idea, that his sensitive and unprotected bride might already have been exposed to the mercy of such boisterous intruders.

He flung himself from his jaded horse, burst through the rabble rout, and was very near experiencing a rough acceptance, only that he chanced to be recognized by one of their noisy set. He called loudly for the landlord, but was quickly answered that "the murtherin' Orangeman took to the run, just in time to miss a reckonin' long scored against him, and that he would think worse of than the most robbin' reckonin' himself ever once scored against a lodger;"—from which Sir William inferred, that the conscious proprietor, being of the opposite party, had, along with almost all the other Protestant inhabitants of the town, joined or followed the garrison on their retreat to Wexford.

Thus, without a clue to guide him in his search after his bride, the young Baronet rushed from room to room, vainly calling upon her name. In a principal bed-room, after exploring many others, he found a group of "pikemen," loud in ribald mirth, as they pressed forward and gaped over each others' shoulders, to view

something held by the leader of their pillaging; and, bursting on, Sir William snatched at his own miniature, the glass of which the man just then held up to view, brightening, or rather dimming it, with the sleeve of his rough frieze coat, as he cried out—

"By gonnies! an' sure my fort'n is made, for good-an'-all: I'll turn myself into a gallanty showman—a penny a-piece to see the rare-show, boys!—a penny apiece!"—he drew back his hand as Sir William endeavoured to seize the miniature—"Masther, asy, asy; every man's loock is his fort'n: d'you want to see the show for nothin', Sir?"

"That picture is mine, my good fellow;—give it me—give it"—

"Make that out, if you can: didn't I find it here, afore it was lost?"

"Come, come!" flinging him money—"give it now."

"Here, then, faith, an' I wish you joy o' your bargain,—by the pike in my hand, I wouldn't swap the half o' this for a score of 'em: an', as you're in the humour," he continued, winking on his companions, "who knows bud you'd buy another thing or two that fell in my way? Here's a glove wouldn't go on my thumb; an' here's a ring I'd give my sweetheart, only it's about a mile an' a half too narrow for Peg's little finger. Will you offer?"

"Double their value!" answered Sir William, his hand trembling with eagerness to possess his bride's right-hand glove, and the wedding-ring he had, the previous morning, put on her finger.

"Tare-an'-age!" resumed the collector of curiosities, "maybe this, too, 'ud lie in your way? you can have it chape:" exhibiting a child's rattle he had somewhere picked up.

A loud laugh at his waggery was interrupted by a sudden and expressive shout in the street, which caused all the men to stop and listen, and then seriously to question each other as to its cause.

"The Orangemen come back again, I'll hould a groat!" said one; and "to see the fun" was resolved on, and forth they issued, shouting in answer to the challenge without.

The man from whom Sir William had got the miniature, glove, and ring, was one of the last to leave the room; the Baronet seized him by the arm.

"See, now; sure, I knew I'd put the temptation in you," said the fellow, grinning loudly, as he again held out the rattle.

"Where did you find the other things?" demanded Sir William.

"D'ye see the bed there?"

"The bed!"

"Yes—there I found 'em."

Sir William stared for a time, seemingly unconscious of his situation, while his eyes rested on the bed. Suddenly he turned round his head to ask another question of his informant; the man was gone, and he remained alone in the chamber, or seemingly alone, as it proved to be. A rustling noise reached him from a

press at one side; he sprang to the spot in all the eagerness of hope, pulled open the folding doors of the press, and a female appeared within it, but not his wife. He seized her, and forced her from her concealment.

"Who are you? do you belong to the house?"

"I'm only a poor innocent sarvant girl, sir, that has no more harum in me nor the time I was born, sir, an' I was only hidden from the Croppies, sir."

"Do you belong to the house?"

"I'm an honest father's and mother's child, sir, an' I'm an honest poor crather myself, an' can show my charakther to you, sir, undher the hand o' Misthress Malone, that sells the soap an' candles in Market-sthreet, an' there's one Misthress Maguire, that—"

"Answer my question!—are you a servant of this house?"

"I was only follyin the childher, sir, an' doin' a hand's turn, over-an'-hither."

"Can you tell me who last occupied this sleeping-chamber?"

"It was a dauther of Sir Thomas Hartley, sir, as purty a sowl as ever my two livin' eyes opened on, an' an ould lady wid her."

"Do you know what has become of these ladies? When did you see them last?"

"Why, then, I'll tell you, sir, an' nothin' bud the truth, all the same as if I was on my dyin' bed, an' they the last words I'd ever spake; or all the same as if a big Croppy had his pike to my breast this moment. Yestherday, sir, it might be about one o'clock in the day, or maybe arlier, or maybe lather, I won't be all out sart'n, bud 'twas nigh hand from one, one way or th' other, because—"

"Never mind the time,—be brief—quick, quick!"

"Well, then, sir, out o' their carriage I seen them comin' yestherday at the dour, an' it wasn't long afther till I seen 'em get into id again, an' it dhruv off; an' I'm tould they went to beg an' pray for the life o' Sir Thomas, that was hanged for bein' a Croppy by candle-light last night; an' the carriage was away for an hour or more, when it came back to us again; an' the ladies got out at the dour the second time, sir, houldin down their heads as they went up stairs; then we soon hard a ring from their room; an', 'here Jinny,' says the misthress, spakin to me, sir, 'pull your cap sthraight over your eyes, throw off the *prauskeen*,* rub your face in a great hurry, an' lave the child to me, an' run up to see what's wantin': 'Here, my honey,' says I, spakin to the child, 'go to the mammy,' an' he set up the squall, sir, bud—"

"Silly creature! leave out this wretched stuff, and tell me of Miss Hartley."

* Coarse apron.

"I will, sir.—I didn't think it was any hurt or harum, sir—"

"Well, go on."

"Yes, sir. The rason it cum for me to go up, sir, was becase the house was to and fro, the waiter, Jack Sherry, gone to larn the news about the Croppies, an' the poor masther forced to be out sodgerin—so, sir, in I came, an' I made my curtshy to the poor ladies; an' there was the nice, purty young crathur lyin' on the bed, an' her hands wringin' this way, an' the nice rosy colour gone from her cheeks, an' her lips as white as the cambric muslin, an' she moanin' an' sighin' so pitiful, sir."

Sir William Judkin here startled the narrator, breaking away from her, and rushing about the chamber like a maniac. After a pause, during which she eyed him in some misgiving, he commanded her to continue.

"I will, Sir.—'Would ye be wantin' any thing at all, my ladies,' says I, makin' my curtshy.—'A glass of water, quick, good girl,' says she, makin' answer; an' down I went, an' brought it up, fresh an' sweet; an' the ould lady gave id to Miss Hartley, an' I went my ways, an' id didn't fall in my way to see 'em again; bud, this mornin', as I hard, about seven o'clock, Sir, Capt'n Talbot ordhered the carriage to the dour."

"Who?"

"Capt'n Talbot, Sir, indeed-an'-deed, Sir," answered the girl, much terrified at the sudden start of her catechist, "an' sure we all thought the sight ud lave our eyes to see him, that people say, hanged her father wid his own hand, havin' any call to Miss Hartley, or to her comin' or goin', any thing about her."

"Had he previously gained admission to the ladies?"

"Why, then, I don't know, full out sart'n, Sir; bud last night, as I was goin' up-stairs, in the dark, to look afther the child, an' he wakenin' in a great roar, Sir, at the same time, sorrow's in me, but I thought I saw Capt'n Talbot, skulkin' by the side o' the dour, outside o' this room, Sir; only I won't take id on me to say so, of a downright sartnty."

"Hell and furies!"

"Oh, Sir, 'twas none o' my fault. I'm a poor crather iv a girl, wid good carakthers—"

"And it was in her carriage that Miss Hartley left the inn?"

"Yes, sir. An' he put up the step wid his own hands."

"Who told you this?"

"Murtoch Kane, the stable-boy, Sir. An' sure, I b'lieve it's Murtoch got the horses ready."

"Where is he to be found?"

"Below in the yard, Sir, where he ought to be, if he hasn't left his work to join wid the Croppies."

Sir William was hurrying away to seek the person named, when the terrified girl besought him to stop an instant, and just tell her

if the Croppies wouldn't kill her, and having received a hasty assurance of safety, she offered to accompany him to the stable-yard.

It generally occurs, that when we are least in the vein to encounter thwarting circumstances, they rapidly present themselves to us; and in his continued search after important information, Sir William Judkin was still doomed to meet an interruption, which in his calmest mood would have irritated him.

Murtoch Kane was one of those vagabonds, to be met with about every inn, who, without any ostensible calling, are extremely ingenious in taxing travellers' purses for the performance of various petty services, always unsought, and most frequently unnecessary; it is needless to add that such characters seldom lay claim to morals or religion, or do not excel in the indulgence of every grovelling vice and propensity. And we would not pause, at this stage of our story, slightly to characterize the individual in question, but that, added to the traits commou to all his tribe, Murtoch Kane's name is still remembered in Enniscorthy as the principal executioner of insurgent vengeance, and the actual perpetrator of the greater number of those cold-blooded murders committed, during fair-fighting elsewhere, upon the rocky hill which rises above the town.

He was a ragged fellow, about twenty-six years of age, with a countenance of which the inherent malignity was disguised beneath a show of low humour, or rather affected carelessness. As Sir William advanced towards the stable to seek him, he came staggering forward, evidently intoxicated, a faded green ribbon tied round his battered hat, and cocked at one side, and a pike in his hand.

The "poor girl wid the good carakthers" pointed him out to Sir William as the object of his search, and the young Baronet accordingly accosted him as he staggered by.

"Stop, my man—a question."

"For the Green or the Orange?" first questioned Murtoch Kane.

"For the Green, and the Green for ever!"

"Hurrah, then! an' it's well you said id: this 'ud be through your backbone, if you said any thing else. Mind what I tell you. I'd shake paws wid a mad dog, bud the pike, the pike for the Orangeman!—ay, an' they'll get it, right an' left, day an' night; their pay-day is come, and who'd refuse 'em their long reckonin'?"

"Hearken! you helped to procurre horses for Sir Thomas Hartley's daughter to leave Enniscorthy, last night?"

"Ay, they hanged him up by candle-light," mistaking the question, "an' the Orange murtherer that done the job, he tuck off the poor daughther. "Oh!" he uttered a bellow, "I'd give a gallon o' whiskey to lay one hand on that *skibbeah** Talbot."

* Executioner.

"If you dislike him so much, why did you assist him to carry away Miss Hartley?"

"Why did I? Who are you that's axin?"

"You saw the young lady enter the carriage?" questioned Sir William evasively; and bent upon extracting information quietly from the intoxicated and unmanageable Murtoch.

"To be sure I did! What have you to say agin Sir Thomas's daughter?"

"Nothing. I am her friend, and, if possible, would rescue her from Talbot."

"Oh, the deceivin Orange thief! Sure, I didn't know a word it was he was to go off by her side, until afther they tuck to the road, an' then I overhard his crony, the black Orangeman that bribed me to stale out the horses, sayin' to another, as much as that it was all Talbot's job. "Oh, murther!" he bellowed again.

"You can tell which road they went?"

"To be sure I can, if I like id. Oh! why didn't he just wait till the boys come in this mornin'!"

"The road to Wexford, you say?" asked Sir William, at a venture.

"Yes, the road to Waxford town: what's that to you?"

"You are certain?" giving money.

"Sart'n, your grandaddy!" doggedly clutching the bribe; "do you take me for a fool? Who says it wasn't to Waxford? Here's Murtoch Kane, that'll pike a score of Orangemen every day the sun gets up, an' who dares say id to him? whoo!"

"Certainly not I, since you *are* so sure of the road Talbot took with Miss Hartley."

"Sure! I wish I was as sure o' meetin' him, the Orange hangman, at the next turn o' the next sthreet. Hurrah for the bould Croppy boys! hurrah!" and he staggered off, yelling out—

"Rise up, my poor Croppies, you're long enough down,
An' we'll pike all these Orangemen out o' the town,
Down, down, Orange, lie down!"

During this dialogue, it was with difficulty Sir William could keep in the boiling ferment of his blood, or bring his trembling lips to articulate the necessary questions. For at length it seemed indeed certain that his bride was in the power of his detested rival; and nothing but an instinctive consciousness of the necessity of arming himself with information for the pursuit, momentarily checked his turbulent fury. Now, he did not hesitate an instant in taking the only measures—though insanity itself might have hesitated in taking them—which his wild passions suggested. He sought his horse. The poor tired animal had found his unassisted way to a stable, and was eagerly snatching a mouthful of food.

He dragged it from this needful indulgence, mounted, and again forcing his way through the rushing crowds of insurgents, and over the trampled bodies of slain, and through the yet flaming suburb, galloped towards Wexford.

But ere he had quite cleared the crowded streets of Enniscorthy, he became confusedly aware, from the explanatory clamour on every side, of the meaning of the continued shout which had attracted the notice and roused the curiosity of the first persons he had encountered at the inn. It was the expression of an agreement, on the part of the greater body of the victors, to evacuate the town, and take up their position on the rocky eminence above it, subsequently distinguished as the scene of Murtoch Kane's massacres, and those of other insurgents, who, remaining there, either in cowardice, or for the satiation of highly excited revenge, perpetrated cruelties for which the mass of the peasant-army were not accountable. The reasons urged by the leaders to the licentious mob for thus abandoning the conquered town were strong; the danger, namely, that a greater force than they had yet encountered might march upon Enniscorthy, and surprise them in the midst of their riot and disorder; yet (and Sir William, absorbed as he was by a private question, could not fail to notice the fact), it proved no easy matter finally to induce the victors to give up the scene, and the remaining spoils of their victory; and though at length the greater number yielded to the threats, the prayers, and the actual coercion of their nominal leaders, a sufficient body, acknowledging no command, remained behind to continue during the night the excesses begun in the heat of triumph.

The Baronet still pressed on his weary steed along the road to Wexford. We repeat, that even a madman might have shrunk from the course he was pursuing. Alone he approached a town in possession of the King's troops, and where a hundred eyes were ready to recognize him at a glance, as the rebel commander, Sir William Judkin. Yet it may be questioned if he once weighed, or even thought of the risk he ran. One purpose mastered and filled his mind; one passion possessed him. To encounter Talbot, even if he could not meet his wife, to force from him an account of her situation, and then to strike him dead at his feet; this was all that the despairing lover, husband, amd rival, now lived for. Could he but once work his vengeance, perhaps the thought of instant destruction to himself after it, called up, as he fiercely glanced over all the circumstances that surrounded him, only a grim smile upon the features of Sir William.

Within three miles of his destined goal, his horse sank exhausted. Revengefully spurning the gasping beast, he bounded on a-foot.

The town wall of Wexford was standing in full preservation, so

that none could gain ingress save through the archways, in which massive gates once stood, and which, at his approach, the panic-struck garrison were hastily barricading and blocking up. At the gate he was instantly recognized and apprehended. The large pistol he had seized the night before was still in his breast; he prepared to use it, it was wrested from him, and his life had been forfeited on the spot, but that the identical yeoman-captain he came to seek interfered to save him. Sir William struggled hard to leave the grasp of his captors and spring upon his rival; but Talbot coolly ordered him to be conveyed by main force to the prison of the town; and notwithstanding his continued resistance, in which he evinced the strength as well as the rage of a foaming madman, half-a-dozen of athletic yeomen dragged him through the streets, and with a brain on fire, and the blood boiling like melted ore through his veins, he was once more a captive, better secured than even in his last dungeon, under lock, bolt, bar, and a succession of formidable doors.

CHAPTER VI.

From many respectable fellow-prisoners, confined like himself, either upon the suspicion or the direct charge of disloyalty, Sir William, immediately on his entrance into the jail, encountered anxious questions concerning the successes and plans of the insurrectionary force; but his fierce answers, or his sullen silence, yielded little information to the catechists, and only caused them to set him down for the maniac he was.

For some time, however, he naturally became alive to the subject which continued to be discussed around him. Whether or not the insurgents would advance upon Wexford, and whether or not they would prove as successful in that town as they had proved in Enniscorthy, now presented, in connexion with his private interests and fate, a most important question. As he had helped to burst the gate of Enniscorthy castle for the liberation of all, except one, pent up within its walls; so, in the event of Wexford falling into the hands of the peasant force, friends would not be wanting, or slow, to fling open the doors of his present dungeon; and thus, and thus only, he might once more be free to pursue the only objects for which he breathed.

It would seem that he had taken up arms against the Government of his country only because, or chiefly because, that step promised, at the moment, to speed him on his course of rescuing his wife, and avenging himself and her upon Talbot. Events, however, since appeared to suggest that he had accidentally sided with the party most likely to gain predominance in the contest.—It is known, that while the insurgents of the County of Wexford proceeded, as we have seen, triumphantly, from the day of their rising, all intelligence of the fate of their fellow-insurgents in other counties was shut out from them; so that, according to the easy credulity of taking for granted what we wish to come to pass, similar and simultaneous success, throughout all the disturbed districts, was assumed as certain; and hence, even Sir William Judkin, particularly in his present fiery mood, might, apart from personal motives, see no reason to regret his choice of a cause. Regret were useless, too, even were there reason for it; and, in occasional moments of mental observation, he haughtily admitted the fact. He had fought against his King; death, in case of ultimate failure and apprehension, was the forfeit; and, standing or falling by his party, he dared that forfeit. Perhaps something lurked in his nature to relish the prospect of bold adventure to be encountered, and deeds of valour to be accomplished in the character of a popular commander; or, if not, it is certain that with such stirring views his present reckless temper fully sympathised.

After some silent indulgence, therefore, of the fury and despair which had possessed him upon his first entrance into the prison, Sir William, in common with his fellow-captives, anxiously calculated the probable movements of the insurgents.

And no less anxiously were these movements watched by the garrison and people of the town.

The capital of the county is eleven Irish miles south-west of Enniscorthy; yet, from many points in Wexford, the dense clouds of smoke, arising out of the conflagration of that part of the conquered town which had been fired, could distinctly be viewed. The militia detachment, who met so signal a fate upon the hill of Owlard, had advanced to the insurgent position from Wexford; and the wild screams of the wives and children of the slain soldiers scarce ceased to fill the ears of the inhabitants, when the defeated garrison of Enniscorthy, covered with blood and dust, and accompanied or followed by a throng of fainting fugitives, crowded their streets for shelter. Young and tender beauty, accustomed from infancy to all the conveniences and little vanities of affluence, tottered in a-foot, gladly clinging for support to the arm of a common soldier;—mothers, respectable too, clasping their babes to their breasts, were just able to stagger through the gates, when they dropped, overcome by fatigue and terror; for both had escaped perhaps after witnessing the massacre of father or of

husband, and in the wild instinct of self-preservation, had rushed, unconsciously, through flame, and shot, and shout, and groan, many miles along a dusty road, and under the meridian rays of a burning sun.

The numbers of the insurgents, too great to be opposed; their frantic courage, and murderous ferocity; all was even exaggerated by the panic-stricken fugitives to their Wexford friends; and while such accounts sent some of the shuddering hearers to terrify their families with fearful forebodings, others, secretely combined in the United Irish cause, listened in different feelings and anticipations, and stealthily withdrew to arrange amongst their confederates the best means of effectually assisting their triumphant brethren, in case of an attack upon the town.

As has been seen, when Sir William Judkin reached one of the gates, some measures were also taken to fortify the place. We have noticed also that the town-wall stood in complete preservation, and it was defended by square castles, differing, in more points than merely that of their form, from other more ruinous fortresses of the kingdom, yet, together with the solid walls, affording good means of resistance, even by a small garrison, against any number of such irregular besiegers as were now expected to approach. And if vigorous precaution had been taken, and a vigorous defence made, there can be little doubt that Wexford would have defied the impetuous insurgents, at least for a sufficient length of time to allow of the advance of a relieving force. Nay, had its wise men only left the insurgents to themselves, to contend with their own distracted and uproarious councils, and even with their doubts of their own ability, hitherto successful as we have seen them, to attempt so serious an affair as the attack of a county town, it is very probable that the good Wexfordians might have remained at peace till the end of the short-lived campaign. But the terror of the pike-head, or the itch for diplomacy, ordered matters otherwise; in what manner, as well as for proof of the assertions just made, we must turn back to their noisy foes to explain.

The lower town of Enniscorthy is situated at different sides of the Slaney, and connected by a rude bridge; and above that portion of it, upon the eastern bank of the river, and at about a quarter of a mile's distance, appears the almost conical eminence of the not uncelebrated Vinegar-hill. To its base is a gradual ascent from the town, and then it rises suddenly, presenting a surface, partly of grey rocks, some swelling out in large masses, some half clothed with dwarf furze, and partly of intervening patches of spare grass, which draw from the scanty mould, during winter's moisture only, their verdant livery; while in summer they become parched into a russet colour, blending with the general barrenness of the hill-side.

The morning before the attack on Enniscorthy, a pleasing and peaceful view might have been enjoyed from the top of Vinegar-hill. It seemed standing in the midst of an extensive amphitheatre of sister eminences, of different elevations and forms, and which receded over one another to different distances, each more or less tinted, according to its remoteness or nearness, with the atmospheric hue which, better than any other finesse of nature, suggests the relative places of large objects. Of these many encircling heights, some had a soft, undulating shape, and some the hard, rugged outline, that proclaims a rocky brow; and beyond the near and middle ones, the whole rural panorama, only varied by swell or hollow, presented an almost universal character of sloping cultivation. Yet other objects relieved the scene. To the north, at a distance of many miles, the old black castle of Ferns was visible, a blue cone of hill towering beyond it; to the west, the eye travelled to the very bases of the ragged Blackstairs mountain, and to the more massive Mount Leinster, the bounds of the county in that direction. The town appeared beneath, seemingly at the foot of the eminence, its suburbs stretching up the adjacent ascents, and part of the main town also climbing to join those less considerable streets, while the other part lay in a sudden hollow by the river. And the sinuous river could be seen, miles distant, —first winding under a remote bridge; then, ere it reached the nearer one of Enniscorthy, dividing, round an island, into two distinct currents; then passing beneath, and separating the scattered town; and then, still visible for two miles of its sea-bound course, gradually widening, yet retaining its mazy character, and overlooked by slanting wood, or green hill, or embowered mansion.

But though, upon the day when we are called to the summit of Vinegar-hill, the general features of this fine prospect were necessarily distinguishable, yet the eye of even the admirer of nature would have deemed them disfigured by the blotches they then wore. Wherever, almost literally speaking, a picturesque cottage or cabin, or a rural mansion, should have stood peacefully basking in the summer light, arose thick smoke or decaying flame, or a blackened ruin appeared instead; the humble ornament of the landscape having been devastated by the Orange party, the more important by the insurrectionists. The thatched suburbs of Enniscorthy, which, previous to yesterday's savage contest, had stretched up the slopes over the river, were now a dingy, shapeless heap of confused ruin. Some of the doors in the lower town yawned wide, since they had been flung or burst open by the fierce invaders; and others that remained shut, gave yet a distinct idea of desolation. Masses of dead or motionless bodies, choking, along with black thatch and broken furniture, the narrow streets, were fearfully indicated to the eye, a few wild figures only stalking through them;—and if the spectator, curious to analyze the

general horror, but descended the hill-side, he might perceive that the intoxicated Croppy often slept out, amongst these groups of dead, his deep debauch of the previous night; that, in some instances, his unconscious head rested on the corse of his comrade, and in others was pillowed upon the silent breast of his party opponent—perhaps upon that of the victim of his own particular vengeance; and the figures which had appeared in motion from the hill-top, would now prove to be some moaning woman, who came to turn up the faces of the slain peasants, searching for the remains of near and dear relatives; while others, with garments tucked round them to avoid the stain of blood, prowled amongst the dead of the other side, only in quest of plunder.

All this, to a merely observant and reasoning spectator, would, the morning after the battle of Enniscorthy, have appeared a sad and a terrible sight; but in few of the vast throng assembled on Vinegar-hill did it arouse any feelings, save those of ferocious exultation. Conquerors, at least in civil war, seldom weep, like Cæsar, over the havoc they have made. In the present case, if the triumphant multitude at all reflected on their actions, it was but to consider them as their sole means of avoiding the destruction they had dealt out to others; and the still numerous reinforcements which continued to repair to the prominent rendezvous, brought with them such accounts of the continued aggressions, in cold blood, of the Orangemen of remote districts, as served to render the victors of Enniscorthy not only proud of the slaughter they had committed, but athirst for more of the blood of their supposed exterminators.

The leaders, after long perseverance in the efforts we have mentioned in the former chapter, ultimately succeeded, during the evening of the capture of Enniscorthy, in concentrating the greater number of their force upon the conspicuous position of Vinegar-hill. Whether or not their alleged motive for the movement was their true motive, no better ground could be chosen by means of which to guard against surprise from an advancing foe; for, full ten miles off, in any direction, the smallest column of troops might easily be descried in motion.

Morning shone clear on the insurgent concourse. The commanders had got together on the very summit of the hill, and in a strife of voices, each straining his lungs to exceed the general din, they flatly contradicted one another's statements; or, without attending to any reasons offered, opposed one another's plans, merely that each might advise and guide alone. Petty leaders endeavoured to insist on their own shallow or interested views, with an eye flashing as impetuously, and with a gesticulation as abrupt, as those whom they had themselves consented to call Generals; and from the subaltern crowd, who, unsummoned, thronged around, there came additional intrusions upon the pro-

priety of debate; every peasant who had left an unprotected cabin behind him, clamorously urging a diversion in its favour. Nay, serious differences occurred between the leaders highest in influence, upon similar, or nearly similar views; each imagining it the very best and wisest course to proceed to the immediate conquest of his own native town or village, in which, or adjacent to which, —apart from the vanity of display amongst old friends, as a victorious patriot general—lay the cause of his zeal; namely, the property, little or great, most worthy, in his eyes, of national guardianship: and as no two of the council of war came from the same district, their opinions regarding the next most worthy object of attack were necessarily as far asunder as the places of their birth or of their residence. In a word, their discussion was little better than the obstreperous altercation of a mob.

After the lapse of many hours, during which no one measure had been unanimously agreed upon, the tired or impatient peasants began to form, like different swarms of bees, into distinct bodies, and to proceed in whatever distinct routes whim or undisciplined desire suggested. Of these throngs, some were miles away, some less distant, and but a very small portion of the original concourse remained upon Vinegar-hill, when a shout was heard from an insignificant party, who had gone to dally and waver on the Wexford road. The band, still on the rocky eminence, caught up this shout; others, departing in different directions, echoed it, until it was sent faintly back by the most remote throngs; and all instantly returned, pell-mell, to reassume their abandoned position, and to discover why it was they rent the air with their own outcries.

And here we arrive at an explanation of the nature and results of the wise negotiations, with the insurgents, of the authorities of Wexford.

Although hasty and random measures had been taken to barricade the entrances into the town through the walls, yet, during the irresolute and impotent councils of "the ginerals" and "the capt'ns" on Vinegar-hill, which awe of the garrison of Wexford considerably embarrassed, still more impotent and wavering were the councils of that very garrison and of its loyal citizen-adherents. It was at last resolved, in the absence of a single direct manifestation of hostility, to send a friendly deputation to the insurgents, in order to dissuade them from farther outrage; three gentlemen of the county, arrested the previous day on suspicion of disloyalty—and who had been imprisoned along with the despairing Sir William Judkin—were selected for the purpose; and it was the arrival of these ambassadors amongst the peasant-crowd on the Wexford road which caused, first, the single shout, and next the successive roars that pealed as a rallying-cry to the almost disbanded force of the Croppies.

The negotiators from the terrified military and people of Wex-

ford delivered their commission. But when, by it, the insurgents understood that they were deemed formidable enough to fill with apprehension those whom they had dreaded to encounter, the resolution to attack the town was naturally and instantaneously formed. There had not been a single voice amongst the deliberators of Wexford sufficiently influential to enforce the every-day truth, that, between two antagonists, admission of weakness by the one is strength conferred upon the other.

Two of the ambassadors were sent back to communicate the resolution which was so promptly taken. The third was forcibly detained by his own neighbours and tenantry, and nominated to a general's command over themselves. And that night, the again concentrated and reinforced insurgents, now not less than forty thousand in number, assumed a new position, within three miles of the threatened town; still, according to their usual custom, choosing a barren elevation, which overlooked, with a shattered and peaky front, the way they must take, and where three large masses of shivered grey stone, more prominent than the others, gave to the place the name of "The Three Rocks." And here, awaiting the day-dawn to light them to the object of destined attack, the vast multitude of men, women, and children, passed the short summer's night, without other covering than the starry skies;—stretching themselves to sleep in a stone-strewn hollow, which ran behind the brow of the splintered eminence that beetled over the road.

Sir William Judkin, prisoner as he continued to be, could not remain unaware of the panic which now possessed the garrison and people of Wexford. Its manifestation, in detail, it was impossible, indeed, he should observe. The weeping and quaking mother, sent to droop over her children; the general movement of shutting up the houses, either that the inhabitants might unseen, and without fear of intrusion, secrete their portable property or ready money, or offer to an unruly enemy the feeble barrier of a closed door: the streets, abandoned to the military, whose looks of precipitation and doubt argued any thing but a hope of success in the approaching conflict; or amongst such citizens as remained abroad, although formerly they had put on the footing of good neighbours, brief words of salutation coldly exchanged, lest they might stand betrayed to each other as sworn enemies in the hour of strife.—while, perhaps, one hurried to seek a hiding-place, or arrange for flight, and the other to prepare the concealed arms he had treasured up for the coming crisis, and to chuckle over them in foretaste of a long-vowed revenge against the very man he had just encountered. These symptoms, and many such as these, of the public agitation around him, Sir William was interdicted from noticing; but, in the faces even of his jailers, he read distinctly, after the return to Wexford of the ambassadors, the fear of death,

or of the loss of property, deemed inevitable at the hands of the infuriated foe, who, but the previous day, had in a great degree rifled, and partly burnt down, the adjacent town of Enniscorthy, and piked, without mercy, every obnoxious person that fell into their power. And recollecting the feelings formerly noticed in Sir William, with reference to the question of the probable success of the insurgents in an attack upon the town, his newly-acquired hopes, derived even from his general conclusions of the position of affairs, may easily be imagined by the reader.

The progress of events, which he could not follow, we are obliged to trace for him.

Few of the inhabitants of Wexford retired to repose upon the night of his arrest. The whole garrison remained under arms; but as the watchword of continued safety passed from sentinel to sentinel, it often changed, notwithstanding its literal import, into a cadence which well might seem to argue the approach of the enemy.

Yet hope had not yet quite fled the breasts of the military and citizens. An express, promising succour to Wexford, arrived during the evening, from a general officer, who, at the first intelligence of the sudden cry to war in the County of Wexford, had set off from the Fort of Duncannon, in the contiguous County of Waterford: and it was not till daybreak that the friends to whom he had pledged his services, learned how incompetent to redeem this pledge this commander proved to be.

Either insensible of the now formidable foe he had to encounter, or incapable of judicious measures, he had left Duncannon almost alone, purposing to meet, at a village eight miles distant from the threatened town, some militia and cannon, while his main force was to follow in his route. Upon the night previous to the attack of Wexford, he gained the point of rendezvous; the militia had not come up, and he retired to rest. But while he enjoyed his sleep, they arrived; and unconscious of his presence in the hamlet, and supposing him in advance, pushed on. Some time after day-dawn, they were espied by the insurgents winding down a hilly road to the left of their position; overwhelming numbers poured down from the rocky eminence; one officer and a score of privates of the military became prisoners; the rest were slain almost before they could be aware of their danger; the ammunition they guarded accidently blew up during the contest; but, besides the arms of the killed and the captive, the shouting victors now dragged up to their high encampment two small pieces of cannon.

The general, thus taken napping, learned, when he awoke, the fate of this detachment; his main force had, however, come up, and in time perhaps to revenge their comrades, and still assist Wexford; but, ordering them to retreat, he left Wexford to assist itself, and fled precipitately the way he had advanced.

A force destined to co-operate with this injudicious or unhappy commander, supposed to be still advancing, marched out of Wexford to make a diversion in his favour. One of its officers, pushing on to reconnoitre, was shot at a long distance by a shelmalier, and upon his death ensued the rapid retreat into garrison of the body he had in part commanded.

It was resolved to evacuate Wexford. Two fresh negotiators were sent out to make terms with the dreaded foe. Full and unmolested possession of the town was tendered, provided the insurgents would stipulate to spare life and property. This condition the leaders haughtily refused, unless, after the departure of the garrison, their arms, ammunition, and accoutrements, should be found in the barracks by the besiegers; and while the ambassadors went back with this answer, the insurgents hotly followed in their footsteps.

In about an hour afterwards, Sir William Judkin, listening, along with his brother captives, to every sound, great and little, that could reach them from abroad, heard a shout, so faint it must have come from a distance, and yet its character was that of one emitted continuously by thousands of human throats. Appalled silence only at first answered it in the town; but anon, shrieks, shrill and despairing, mixed with all the gradually rising clamour of precipitate flight and confusion, responded to its repeated challenge. As the invaders came near, the two previously distinct uproars merged into one; then, by degrees, intense cheers of mad exultation began to rise over every other sound—gained at length sole and tremendous mastery, rang nearer and nearer to Sir William's prison-walls, burst around them and above them, like—if it could be—shrill thunder; and amid the clang of shivered bolt and bar, of answering shouts under the same roof with him, of stamping and rushing, and roaring along vaulted passages and through echoing dungeons—Sir William, his own lungs almost frantically adding to the terrible diapase, and his own rush and bound not less uncontrolled than that of any ecstatic insurgent or liberated captive around him—Sir William was again free!

CHAPTER VII.

While some of the meaner of the enlarged captives flung up their hats and mingled with their liberators, and while others of more consideration were hailed with frantic greetings, and clamorously appointed to the dignity of leaders, Sir William, after the first effusion of his own wild joy, seemed to become equally insensible to the yells that still pealed around him, and to the furious action by which, exuberant at all times as is the impassioned gesticulation of the Irish peasant, the victors manifested their sense of continued success.

Having crossed the threshold of his prison, he stood aside, his back leaning against its wall, a moody and uninterested man amidst the exultation of thousands, and solely self-occupied in endeavouring to shape out some course by which his enfranchisement might be made serviceable to his private views. Hasty accounts, interchanged between his late fellow-prisoners and their liberators, of yesterday's proceedings; rapid allusions to the state of the town, to the sudden flight of its garrison, and some of its inhabitants, towards Ross, and of others towards the ships in the harbour; all this was lost upon his ear. One only sentence, uttered by a friendly citizen, raised his attention. The man spoke of Sir Thomas Hartley's death, and went on to mention that, in the course of the day, his carriage had arrived in Wexford, strongly guarded by a body of yeomen, and that, at the door of a particular house, a lady, closely veiled and cloaked, had descended from it. Sir William sprang to the speaker, seized his arm, pulled him to himself, learned the name of the proprietor of the house spoken of, and then, no longer inactive, he pushed through the throng, one sole object engaging his mind.

To the wild confusion around he still remained indifferent. If, during his furious progress through the obstructed streets, a door was battered in, and a faint shriek succeeded to the crash, he heard or regarded it not. Nay, when a miserable fugitive, winged by the fear of a shocking death, had gained some advance of his pursuers, flung himself at Sir William's feet, and with upturned features of supplicating despair, and burning, starting eyes, piteously claimed his protection—he but stopped to unloose from his knees the wretch's grasping hands—to hurl him to his executioners, muttering—"Talbot, were it you?"—and then he pursued his way.

But a more serious incident, in which, merely to break down

impediments to his own business, he was obliged to bear a part, caused farther interruption to his career.

The Insurgents had stipulated that life and property should be spared, provided the arms, ammunition, and accoutrements of the garrison, were left behind. But the garrison abandoned the town —so precipitately as, in many instances, to abandon, at the same time, their wives and children—before even the return, from the besiegers, of their own envoys; and consequently they did not comply with terms which they would not tarry to learn. The invading throng, disappointed of the expected spoils, which, above all others, they valued, pronounced, as impetuously as their foes had fled before them, that faith was broken towards the Wexford army of liberty; and the black passions of the multitude, that in a degree had been tamed by the pride of conscious predominance, and by exhortations from the leaders to uphold, in its dignity, the high character of conquerors, began, like the first tossing of the waters beneath the scourge of the tempest, to lash each other with a fury which threatened fearful retaliation.

A street, through which Sir William must necessarily pass, was densely blocked up by the greater number of the wrathful concourse; and, as he joined their outskirts, they had just evinced omens of this dangerous mood, when three or four leaders, headed by Father General Rourke, springing into laudable energy, called on him to assist in allaying the rising gust, that they well knew, if once fully let loose, it would be as difficult to conciliate as the matured violence of the ocean-rage, to which we have likened its symptoms.

Chiefly for the purpose of scattering the throng, through whose wedged array he could not hope to penetrate, Sir William answered the claim made upon him, and followed Rourke into the midst of the howling people, exerting himself, as all the other leaders did, to produce the much-desired result; but by none of their commanders were the multitude so effectually swayed as by the clerical captain, as, with the accost of rude, authoritative intrepidity, he rode boldly amongst them—sparing, when advice and explanation failed, neither spiritual anathema, nor more substantial blows; all quailed beneath his voice or arm: and Wexford, on the point of destruction, was saved. Afterwards, indeed, some houses, deserted, closed up, and therefore showing a face of inhospitality, were broken open and pillaged; and also some belonging to persons who had been marked down as notorious enemies to the Insurgent cause. A few lives were sacrificed too to individual hate or ferocity, which nothing could control; but, although upon every side reigned utter turbulence, injury to property or life was partial, and by no means ensued to the extent that might be feared from a host of revengeful men, masters over all, and armed with the full power to do mischief. And here, let us add a fact, which,

in the estimation of every candid inquirer into human nature, must throw a redeeming ray of grace around the blackest crimes perpetrated in hasty vengeance by the Irish Insurgents of 1798. During their moments of maddest licentiousness, neither in the town or county of Wexford, nor in any other town or county over which insurrection spread its blaze, occasionally destroying as it listed, was female honour once outraged; or, excepting a single peculiar and fearful instance, female blood shed!

But, after Sir William's escape through the dispersing throng, the house to which he forced his way, proved to be one of those marked out for destruction, as belonging to a yeoman captain, who had been distinguished for "activity," as it was called, "previous to the rising." And, to add to his fears at this intelligence, he farther learned, ere he could scramble past the threshold, that, surely anticipating the fate which awaited him, its proprietor, like the innkeeper at Enniscorthy, had fled from Wexford before the arrival of the Insurgents, and left all the females of his family to the mercy of those he most dreaded.

"An' they're before you, in the house, if you want 'em, Ginerel," added his informant.

Through an astounding jumble of crash and vociferation in the lower part of the house, Sir William sprang up-stairs, and burst his way into the principal room. Here was but a continuation of the scene he had escaped from below. Windows were shattered, and furniture was dashed to pieces and flung out through them into the street; and mingled with the shout of fury came the shout of merriment: the wildest act of destruction, in accordance with the hidden character of the Irish peasant, often producing the heartiest laugh:—hidden we have called that character, and it is so;—its minor traits, indeed, such as appear, or are put forward, in every-day intercourse, any one may catch; but owing to a long habit of abstraction, or rather banishment from all interchange of social thought or feeling with those ranking above him, the real moral elements that form every kind of character—the springings of the heart, and the mental combinations, no matter how rude, which end in impulse—those secrets of his inner heart, the Irish peasant keeps concealed to the present hour, as well from the oppressors he hates, as from the friends who, if they knew him better, could better serve him.

Sir William's eye lighted on a man he had before seen in almost a similar situation. It was no other than the individual who had sold him his own miniature and his bride's gloves and wedding-ring, in the inn at Enniscorthy; and still this person seemed to be the presiding genius of discovery in the work of pillage. With a heavy hammer he battered at a chest of drawers; and ere, one by one, he tossed out the contents of each drawer to his crowding followers, he might be observed to run his own hand, with much

stealthy dexterity, through the valuable articles, and sometimes to steal it, unseen, to his pocket.

"Sparables for the cratures o' women, boys!" he said, emptying a drawer-full of elegant finery upon the floor; there was a laughing strife for shares of the prize, and then the drawer was shivered to pieces, and cast into the street.

"An' here—the poor Capt'n makes shirts for Croppies, boys," flinging down another, stuffed with the useful matters he had mentioned.

Sir William darted upon him, and clutched him tight.

"Asy, now, asy, neighbour!" cried the fellow.

"How have you disposed of the ladies of this house, rascal?"

"Pike the life out o' the Orangeman!" was the cry around, as the crowd deemed they saw their temporary leader violently assaulted by an enemy.

"I'm not Orange, friends—I fought for you at Enniscorthy," said Sir William.

"Hould off—hould off!—his honour spakes the truth," expostulated the man. "Many's the one I hard say id—an' I know him to-day though I didn't know him yestherday."

The appeal produced peace, and the speaker resumed, quietly turning to his captor, who still held him secure—"An' is id about the poor ladies your honour is axin?"

"Yes, yes! Where are they?—Safe—safe—or I will shoot you where you stand!"

"Oh, then, if that's all, safe enough they are,—only they were runnin' here an' there; an' just to keep 'em out o' harum, I've put 'em snug an' cozy into one crib together."

"What do you mean, fellow?—Explain, this instant!"

"Asy, now, your honour; don't be too fraptious, all out, wid a body;—you were free enough in Enniscorthy, wid your mokuses, only for a lady's glove, an' a lady's ring; an' will you give nothin' at all to the boy that maybe 'ill help you to the weeny hand, an' the weeny finger, that wears the both?"

Sir William almost emptied his purse into the horny palm of the mercenary knight,—adding, that if he found himself trifled with, he would take signal vengeance.

"Oh, never fear; we'll gi' you pick an' choose of all in the house, at laste: come, your honour, I'll bring you to the very dour o' the cage."

"Lead on, Sir, I'll follow you—ay, to the world's end, if you deceive me."

"Well, your honour, sure it 'll only be ketch him who can, betuxt us."

But Sir William's doubts were unnecessary: his guide had stated but the facts. Having ascertained, with yells of baffled revenge, the timely flight of the yeoman captain, the Insurgents,

only venting their rage upon his property, had driven the ladies of the house into a garret room, and while the work of plunder and devastation went on below, there locked them in, unmolested at their hands, save by the party execrations which they would have lavished upon Saint Bridget, or any other female saint in the calender, if she or any one of them were an Orangewoman.

The man unlocked and flung the door open, and with a giggling laugh hastily returned to a scene of more interest. Sir William saw four females in the room, who, at his appearance, started from trembling terror into horrid despair: his eye scanned the group; one seemed the lady of the house; two others, her daughters; and the fourth was not his wife, but, strange enough to relate, Miss Alicia Hartley.

The pallid faces, the clasped hands, the humbled postures, and the beseeching eyes of the three first-mentioned ladies, conveyed no meaning to Sir William Judkin. His wife did not appear—he comprehended nothing else.

As he stood motionless at the door, Miss Alicia, seated on the floor, at one side, and supporting her back against the wall, seemingly in an exhausted state, slowly recognized him and pronounced his name. He sprang to her.

"Where is our Eliza, dear madam?—where is she?" growing impatient of the old lady's tearful silence, as he knelt before her.

"Oh, Sir William!" answered the feeble Miss Alicia, "I wish I could inform you!"

"And you cannot, madam!"

"Alas! no;—if I could—kneeling, as you do, before me, so like one now no more——"

"Absurd, madam!—surely this at least you can answer—where did you part from her?—when?"

"I have not seen my poor child since about ten o'clock yester evening."

"Eternal powers!" Sir William sprang to his feet. "How!—where?—in what manner were you separated?—and could you leave her side, Miss Alicia Hartley? could you leave her unprotected?—you must account with me, madam, why you have done this!"—his eyes turned in rage even upon the helpless object stretched beneath them.

"Heaven can witness," answered the trembling old lady, in bitter anguish, "I am sufficiently wretched, without the additional misery of your anger, Sir William: it is not necessary, indeed it is not, to overwhelm me. Grant me fortitude, O my God! to bear my sufferings as a Christian should!"

"But your answer, madam!"

"I will, I will, Sir William—do not look so fiercely on me, and I will answer you; as well, at least, as my shattered and distracted recollection enables me:—and oh! dismal, bleak, and pitiful,

are now my recollections of all the past. Oh, my poor brother!—oh, Thomas, Thomas!—The Lord strengthen me! the Lord pity me!" and she relapsed into a feeble paroxysm of weeping, from which Sir William at last refrained to rouse her.

But finally, in broken words, half of sorrowful ejaculation, and of continued prayers to Heaven for the strength she was but too conscious of not possessing, Miss Alicia began to recount the occurrences of the previous night.

Some time after she and her niece arrived in Enniscorthy, they were weeping together, and starting at every sound, in expectation of the arrival of a messenger despatched to gather tidings of the proceedings at the castle, when a tall woman entered the apartment.

"A tall woman, madam!—did you remark her features?"

"No; they were either hidden from me, or else my dim eyes could not observe them at the distance at which she stood."

"Well, madam?"

"This unannounced visitant requested a private interview with Miss Hartley, who seemed willing to grant it, and I was excluded from their conference. They spoke together a considerable time. At her departure I found our Eliza much agitated by some new feelings; she told me that the woman had been the bearer of a letter from her father."

"From her father, Miss Alicia?"

"Alas! yes;—and though, at the moment, this allayed my doubts and fears, I have since but too truly become aware that the alleged letter must have been a forgery; for scarce did I arrive in this house, when the people informed me that, at the time it was said to have been written, my poor brother was—was not alive to write it."

Sir William underwent the test of a fresh fit of weeping.

"The woman also pretended to bear to my dear child a letter from you, Sir William."

"Great powers, madam!"

"Though I need not ask you if this, too, was not a base forgery."

"I certainly did send her a note, madam, but as certainly not by such a messenger; the keeper of Enniscorthy prison promised, for a bribe, to forward it."

"Well, this note came to our Eliza's hand—if, indeed, it was the same you sent—"

"Mine was written with a pencil."

"And so was this, for I read it."

The old lady continued to say that the contents of the other letter were withheld from her by Eliza; that, some time after, overcome by grief and feebleness, she sank into a slumber, upon awaking from which, her niece did not appear, nor had Miss Alicia since heard of her.

With respect to her own appearance in Wexford, she proceeded to say, that, after a night spent in vain inquiries and laments, the person to whom she ascribed all her misfortunes abruptly presented himself before her; that, not able to speak her fear or horror of him, she fainted away; that, regaining her senses, she found herself in the family carriage, rapidly driven along, she knew not whither, and closely guarded by yeomen; that, entering Wexford, the vehicle stopped at the door of the house in which she at present was; that the gentleman and lady of the house received her kindly, as a charge they had expected; that, immediately on her arrival amongst them, she had been compelled to take to her bed; whence, an hour ago, the invasion of the cruel rebels rendered her uprise a matter of necessity.

No farther information could Sir William obtain from the shocked and enfeebled old lady; but this, though not enough in one sense, was too much in another. If he had previously entertained any doubt as to the present position of his bride, he now became at least certain that she must be sought only at the hands of Talbot.

Indifferent to Miss Alicia's feeble cries for protection, he rushed out of the house, into the still crowded and uproarious street; he became conscious of a confused stupor of brain, and his first wish was to shun the riot and the throngs around him, and escape for a moment to some silent spot, where, flinging himself on the earth, in the open, free air, his mind might grow cool enough to arm him with deliberate thought and purpose.

As yet, while he boldly pushed through all the obstruction in the crowded streets, he only felt a return, in increased force, of the impulse before felt, to seek out Talbot in the very face of peril and death, clutch him by the throat, demand his wife, and then—kill him, and tread upon him. Nor did this seem difficult to the feverish mind of the young Baronet. He would be more cunning and wary than he had before been. He would disguise his features; he would assume a yeoman's uniform—thus he might easily gain access to Talbot's haunts—and, once found—touched—he would drag him into some private place, and then—he actually bounded at his own fancied picture of the encounter.

Absorbed by the greedy longing for his revenge, he continued to hurry on, when some one caught him by the arm. Fiercely turning to resent the interruption, he recognized Father Rourke. The face of the reverend warrior, except where perspiration had forced a distinct way, was fearfully blotched and stained; his lips were parched; his voice sounded hoarse and exhausted, and altogether he appeared as a man who had undergone extreme toil, but yet whose constitution would not yield to toil of the severest kind.

"Whither so fast, my young soldier?"

"You know already, Sir!—to seek out a traitor-villain, Talbot!

to seek and find him, if he be on the surface of the earth!"—and it seemed, as if by this desperate expression of his purpose, or rather of his impulse, he had fixed himself in his wild resolve.

"You have not yet got back the poor little wife from him, then?"

Sir William grinned and stamped his reply.

"Well; suppose I can direct you where to meet him at least?"

"Is he in the town!—secured!"

"No; yet in the hands of those who will make him answer your questions: for, if my eye did not deceive me, I saw him, upon our way to Wexford, taken prisoner, at the head of a small number of his poor yeomen, and marched to our stationary camp on Vinegar Hill."

"You are sure, Sir?"

"Not downright positive, so as to make oath of the thing; but the prisoner certainly was a yeoman officer, in the uniform of his corps, and Talbot it appeared to me."

"Bless you, bless you, good friend! I will set off after him this moment."

"Had you not better take some rest and refreshment, before you go?"

"Rest and refreshment! with this before me to do?—Where shall I find a horse, Father Rourke?"

"By the life, man, as I tould you before, I am General Rourke now."

"Well—General Rourke—but can you assist me to a horse?"

"Why, yes, I think I can; or sure you may easily assist yourself: few stables in Wexford but are open to your pick and choose, I believe."

"Good-day, then—"

"Oh, a good-day to you, lad," replied the clerical hero, gazing in some wonder after Sir William, as, at the hint of his honest friend, he proceeded to possess himself of a steed by means which, under other circumstances, might have been termed horse-stealing. —"A pair of bright eyes for your paathriotism, after all!" continued General Rourke.

CHAPTER VIII.

What Father Rourke has just said, as well as some former remarks we have ourselves made, will lead the reader to expect the following information.

After the great mass of the Insurgents abandoned their position on Vinegar Hill, in advance upon Wexford—which, as we have seen, was yielded to them without a struggle—still a considerable number, attached to their cause, remained on the rocky eminence, ostensibly as a garrison to guard the conquered town below, but really to shun the chance of open fighting, or else to gratify a malignant nature. We might indeed say, that all who acted upon either of the motives mentioned, were influenced by both. For it is generally true, that the bravest man is the least cruel, the coward most so; that he who hesitates not to expose himself in a fair field, yet will hesitate to take life treacherously, coolly, or at a disproportioned advantage over his opponent; while the boastful craven, who shrinks from following in his footsteps, glories to show a common zeal in the same cause, by imbruing his hands in the blood of the already conquered, of the weak, or of the defenceless.

And, apart from the new recruits that continued to come in to the popular place of rendezvous, the majority of the executioners and butchers of Vinegar Hill were, according to the accounts of living chroniclers on both sides of the question, individuals of the kind last hinted at. Amongst these, indeed, mingled some who, if peculiar outrage had not temporarily roused their revenge to a maddening thirst for blood, might never have brutalized themselves, and shamed the nature they bore, by participation in such deeds as were done upon the breezy summit of that fatal hill; but still they were outnumbered by their brethren of a different character; men, demons rather, to be found in all communities, whose natural disposition was murderous, and who, but for the coward fear of retributive justice, would spill blood upon the very hearthstone of household peace. Alas for our boasted nature, when such beings share it!

At the head of the main force, all the principal or more respectable leaders had necessarily taken their departure from "the camp;" yet some persons, also called leaders, remained in nominal command over the skulking mob we have described; themselves scarce raised above the scum and dregs who, for a recognized similarity and aptness of character, rather than for any real merit, chose them as their "capt'ns." And by these men were conducted or de-

spatched, during the previous night and day, different bands, in different directions, to seize on provisions, to drive in cattle and sheep, and to lead captive to the rendezvous all whom they might deem enemies to the cause of what was now pompously styled—little Peter Rooney's heart jumping at the sound—"The Waxford Army of Liberty."

Accordingly, sheep, cows, oxen, and Orangemen, or supposed Orangemen, had, previous to Sir William Judkin's approach to the hill, been abundantly provided for the satiation of the only two cravings felt by their ferocious captors: such of the former as could not immediately be devoured, being suffered to ramble among the rocks and patches of parched grass on the side of the eminence, until hunger again called for a meal; and such of the latter as, from whim or fatigue, were not summarily despatched, being thrust into a prison,—a singular one—until revenge, or common murder, again roared for its victims.

On the summit of the height stood a roofless, round building, originally intended for a windmill, but never perfected, because, perhaps, in the middle of the projector's work, it became tardily evident to him, that the river at his feet supplied a better impetus for grinding corn than was to be gained from the fitful breeze, after mounting up the side of the steep hill. In Ireland such buildings rarely occur, inasmuch as, almost in every district, the river or the rill invites the erection of the more diligent water-wheel; and, indeed, we have heard that the half-finished pile in question was the first thought of an English settler, accustomed to such structures in his own country, and subsequently abandoned for the reasons already suggested.

But, at the time of our story, this roofless round tower, about seven paces in diameter, and perhaps twenty-five feet in height, was appropriated to a use very different from that for which it had been planned;—it served, in fact, as a temporary prison for the unfortunate persons captured by the marauding garrison of Vinegar-Hill; and many were the victims thrust through its narrow doorway to meet a horrid death on the pikes of the savages abroad.

Never, before or since, in Ireland, did the summer sun dart fiercer rays than, as if in sympathy with the passions and acts it witnessed, during the hot struggle of civil war in the year 1798. And as Sir William Judkin spurred his jaded, smoking horse towards the eminence, beast and rider seemed faint with heat and toil.

It may be asserted, that a bridegroom elect, if young, love-stricken, and of an ardent nature, will sleep little upon the eve of his wedding-day; that a thousand sweet thoughts—but this is not the time farther to image forth the delightful visions which may chase sleep from his pillow. If the anticipations of bliss prove enemies to repose, the furious working of strong passions—of dis-

appointed love—devouring rage—and drouthy vengeance, will more surely cause nature to spurn at the thought of slumber. And these assertions being true, it hence appears, that for the last three nights, and up to the evening of the present day, Sir William could have enjoyed no rest. For supposing him kept waking by happiness upon the first night of the three; recollecting that he passed the next partly in Enniscorthy Castle, partly in his visit to Hartley Court, and partly in his wild career back again to Enniscorthy, until his rencounter with Father Rourke; and the next in Wexford prison, after a day not idly wrought through amid the flames, and smoke, and blood of the conquered town, as well as amid an uninterrupted paroxysm of private passion, which gained its climax, when, by the hand of the very loathed rival he sought to trample down, he was himself foiled and made a captive; and when, in the foamings of his rage and despair, repose must have been impossible;—supposing and recollecting all this, the young Baronet, as with haggard cheeks, with reeking and dust-stained brows, and with fierce, bloodshot eyes, he now strained up the difficult ascent of Vinegar Hill, must have shown the faintness visible in feature and limb, even from a want of "Tired Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep;" if, indeed, there were no other causes to produce it.

And yet nature was not quite exhausted in him, but rather, in obedience to the stern mandate of his will, summoned his strength for a last effort.

His horse, although stretching every muscle at the goad of his bloody spur, could but creep with distended nostril and bursting eye against the steep and rocky-encumbered acclivity: and, impatient of the animal's tardy progress, Sir William sprang, with an imprecation, from his back, and pushed upward, sobbing, indeed, and drenched in perspiration at every step, yet with a constancy and a nerve scarce to be accounted for, unless we say that his heated brain gave him such a stimulus as often imparts incredible strength to the confirmed maniac. He gained a view of the old windmill-tower. Upon its top was hoisted a rude flag of sun-faded green, on which, in clumsy white letters, had been inscribed "Liberty or Death,"—and, had the breeze been brisk enough to float the banner to its full extent, all the words would have met the eye. But the summer-breeze, as if disgusted from its agency, had fled the summit of Vinegar Hill, leaving that baleful flag to droop over the scene beneath it, until within its heavy folds the word "Liberty" became hidden, and "Death" alone was visible.

His banner it might indeed well appear to be—drooping, in appropriate listlessness, as it exhibited the name of the fell destroyer above the havoc he had made.—For, just below the base of the tower, the rocks and the burnt grass were reddened, and lifeless bodies, frightfully gashed, lay here and there amongst them, some

fully to be seen, others partly concealed by the stunted furze and shrubs.

Sir William still toiled upward. In different places along the hill-side, and even at some distance beyond its foot, were promiscuous groups of men, women, and children,—some reposing after fatigue, and others seated round blazing fires of wood and furze. The slaughtered carcasses of sheep and cows often lay in close neighbourhood with the mortal remains of their enemies; and the hungry and houseless Croppy hacked a piece from the plundered animal he had killed for his food, held it on his pikehead before the blaze, and when to his mind thus inartificially cooked, either stretched his rude spit, still holding the morsel on its point, to some member of his family, or voraciously devoured it himself. And even here, amongst these houseless and friendless people—none, we would add, of the ferocious garrison of the windmill prison, but rather some poor wanderers from a burnt cabin, recently come in—even amongst them, surrounded by sights of horror, and stifling their hunger in this almost savage manner, national characteristics were not worn down. The laugh was frequent, as the cook made some droll remark upon the novelty of his occupation, or the excellence of the fare; the words deriving half their import from his tone and manner as he perhaps said—"Well! it's nate mate, considherin orange sheep;"—or—"By gonnies! orange is the Croppy's friend, an' who'll deny id;"—holding the broiled flesh high on his pike:—"Sure it's no other than a friend 'ud feed fat sheep for a body;—open your mouths an' shet your eyes, now boys an' girls—the biggest mouth 'ill have this undher the teeth, I'm thinkin':"—and then they gaped and laughed loud, as, with a grave face, the examiner went round to decide on the comparative width of each yawning cavern.

There were carousing groups too, sending illicit whiskey, or other more legal liquor, from hand to hand; and upon them the beverage did not fail of its enlivening effect. And leaders appeared, with green ribands, or perhaps a military sash around their persons, or epaulettes on their shoulders, torn, as well as the secondmentioned article, from officers they had slain, inspecting different bands of insurgents as they practised their pike exercise; now driving forward the weapon at a given object; now darting it over their shoulders as if to meet a foe from behind; and now adroitly grasping it at either end with both hands, and bringing into play the elastic staff, as, with great dexterity, they whirled it round their persons, to keep off an attack in front. And all the while arose loud vociferations, each directing the other, according as he arrived, or fancied he had arrived, at greater proficiency than his neighbour.

But Sir William's attention was at length riveted upon the particular throng who, variously occupied, surrounded the narrow

entrance to the old tower. The clamorous crowd, with furious action and accents, hustled together, and a first glance told that their present occupation brought into energy all the ferociousness of their nature.

Some of them, who were on horseback, waved their arms, and endeavoured to raise their voices over the din of those around, who, however, vociferated too ardently to listen to their words; and, as all looked on at the slaughter committed by a line of pikemen drawn up before the tower, whose weapons were but freed from one victim to be plunged into another, it was not merely a shout of triumph, but the more deadly yell of glutted vengeance, or malignity, which, drowning the cry of agony that preceded it, burst, with little intermission, from all.

Two sentinels, armed with muskets, guarded the low and narrow entrances to the temporary prison, and grimly did they scowl on the crowded captives pent up within its walls. Another man, gaunt and robust in stature, having a horseman's sword buckled awkwardly at his hip, a green ribbon tied round his foxy felt hat, the crimson sash of a slain militia officer knotted round his loins, two large pistols thrust into it, and a formidable pike in his hand, rushed, from time to time, into the tower, dragged forth some poor victim, put him to a short examination, and then, unless something were urged in favour of the destined sufferer, sufficient to snatch him from the frightful fate numbers had already met, he flung him to his executioners. And this man, so furious, so savage, and so remorseless, was Shawn-a-Gow.

Armed also with a musket, and stationed between the line of pikemen and the door of the tower, in order that he might be the first agent of vengeance, stood the ill-favoured scoundrel we have mentioned in a former chapter—the murderous Murtoch Kane, late a "stable-boy" at the inn of Enniscorthy. This fellow would take life for pastime; but still, as he levelled at his victim, proud of the privilege of anticipating his brother-executioners, his brow ever curled into the murderer's scowl.

The hasty interrogatories proposed to each cringing captive by Shawn-a-Gow, midway between the tower and the pikemen, had exclusive reference to the religious creed of the party; and the acknowledgment of Protestantism, deemed synonymous with Orangeism, at once proclaimed, or rather was assumed as proclaiming, a deadly enemy, meriting instant vengeance; yet in this, the rabble-insurgents of Vinegar Hill acted with a curious inconsistency. Many Protestants held command in the main force of which they called themselves adherents;—nay, the individual selected by unanimous choice as "Commander-in-Chief," was of the established religion of the State. But why pause to point out any departure from principle in the persons of such men as are before us? Were their deeds to be justly visited on the more courageous as well as

more numerous bodies of the insurgents, we might indeed occupy ourselves with the question.

Panting and nearly fainting, Sir William Judkin gained the tower, and, ere he could address a question to those around, stood still to recover his breath. Two prisoners were dragged forth by the relentless Shawn-a-Gow.

"Are you a Christian?" he demanded, glaring into the face of one trembling wretch, as he grasped him by the collar.

"I am, Jack Delouchery," he was answered.

"Are you a right Christian?"

"I am a Protestant."

"Ay—the Orange."

"No, not an Orangeman."

"Now, hould silence, you dog! every mother's son o' ye is Orange to the backbone. Is there any one here to say a word for this Orangeman?"

There was an instant's silence, during which the pale, terror-stricken man gazed beseechingly upon every dark and ominous face around him; but the cry "Pay him his reckonin'" soon sealed the victim's doom; and with a fierce bellow, the words "Ay, we'll weed the land o' ye—we'll have only one way;—we'll do to every murtherer o' ye what ye'd do to us;"—was the furious sentence of the smith, as he pitched him forward. Murtoch Kane shot, and a dozen pikes did the rest.

The smith seized the second man. One of the lookers-on started forward, claimed him as a friend, and told some true or feigned story of his interference previous to the insurrection, between Orange outrage and its victims; and he was flung to his patron by Shawn-a-Gow, with the carelessness of one who presided over life and death; the same savage action tossing the all but dead man into life, which had hurled the previous sufferer into eternity.

Sir William Judkin, as the smith again strode to the door of the prison, came forward to address him, with the question ready to burst from his chopped and parched lips, when the man whose name he would have mentioned, already in the gripe of Shawn, was dragged forth into view.

The Baronet stepped back. His manner changed from its fiery impetuosity. He now felt no impulse to bound upon a prey escaping from his hands. In the Gow's iron grasp, and in the midst of a concourse of sworn enemies, the devoted Talbot stood sufficiently secured; and, as if to indulge the new sensations of revenge at last gratified, or to compose himself to a purpose that required system in its execution, he stood motionless, his lynx-eye darting from beneath his black brows arrowy glances upon his rival, and his breathing, which recently had been the pant of anxiety, altered into the long-drawn respiration of resolve.

Captain Talbot appeared despoiled of his military jacket, his

helmet, his sash, and all the other tempting appendages of warlike uniform, which long ago had been distributed amongst the rabble commanders of "the camp." No man can naturally meet death with a smile: it is affectation even in the hero that assumes it; it is bravado, on other lips, to hide a quailing heart: it was the vanity of consistency in the stoic, because his disciples were looking on with their stiles and tablets to minute his last words and conduct to posterity; had he been bleeding to death in a desert, the echoes of the solitude would have made answer to his moans. Even He who triumphed over death, and whose example must teach how to die, as well as how to live, prayed that the bitter cup might pass away; and even the consolations of His religion will but serve to clothe the features with solemn resignation to the loss of life. But, particularly in the event of a sudden and terrible summons from existence, hero and coward, saint and sinner, must present alike, to the approach of the dread summoner, though perhaps in different degrees of expression, an eye of horror and a pallid cheek. And Captain Talbot, whatever might have been the strength and the secrets of his heart, as he instinctively resisted the compelling arm of Shawn-a-Gow, was pale and trembling, and his glance was that of terror.

Hopeless of mercy, he spoke no word, used no remonstrance; it was unavailing. Before him bristled the red pikes of his ruthless executioners; behind him stood Murtoch Kane, cocking his musket; and the grasp that dragged him along told at once the determination and the strength of the infuriated giant.

"There's a dozen o' ye, I'm sure!" sneered Shawn; "I'll stand out to spake for Sir Thomas Hartley's hangman." The tone of bitter, savage mockery in which he spoke, grated at Talbot's ear, as first grinning into his prisoner's face, he then glanced in fierce triumph over the crowd.

"A good pitch to him, Capt'n Delouchery," cried one of the executioners: "don't keep us waitin'; we're dhry an' hungry for him:" and a general murmur of execration followed, and an impatient shout at the delay of vengeance.

"My undeserved death will be avenged, murderers as you are," said the ghastly Captain Talbot, in reckless serenity of accent.

Shawn-a-Gow held him at arm's length, and with an expression of mixed ferocity and amazement again stared into his face.

"An' you're callin' us murtherers, are you?" he said, after a moment's pause—"Boys! bould Croppy boys, d' ye hear him? Tell me ar'n't you the man that stood by the gallows foot, wid the candle in your hand, waitin' till the last gasp was sent out o' the lips o' him who often opened his dour to you, and often sat atin an dhrinkin wid you, under his own roof?—ar'n't you, Talbot, that man?"

No answer came from the accused.

"You don't say no to me; ay! becase you can't;—an' you call out murtherers on us.—Are you here, Pat Murphy?" he roared.

"I'm here," replied the man who had before raised the first cry for instant vengeance.

"Do you know any thing good this caller o' names done to you?"

"It was him an' his yeomen hung the only born brother o' me."

"An' d' you hear that, *you* murtherer?—d' you hear that, an' have you the bouldness in you to spake to us?—I'll tell you, you Orange *skibbeah!* we'll keep you up for the last; ay, by the sowl o' my son! we'll keep you for the very last, till you're half dead wid the fear, an' till we'll have time to pay you in the way I'd glory to see or—come here, Murphy; come out, here—stand close —you ought to be first; take your time wid him; keep him feeling id, as long as a poor Croppy 'ud feel the rope, when they let him down only to pull him up again."

The man stepped forward as he was ordered. Shawn-a-Gow swung the struggling Captain Talbot around. With the instinctive avoidance of a terrible death, the prisoner grasped with his disengaged hand the brawny arm that held him, and, being a young man of strength, clung to it in desperation—in desperation without hope. But, although he was young and strong and desperate, too, he opposed the sinew of a Hercules. The smith, with his single arm, dashed him backwards and forwards, until, maddened by Talbot's continued clinging, and his agile recovery of his legs at every toss, Shawn's mouth foamed; he seized in his hitherto inactive hand the grasping arms of the struggler, tore them from their hold, and "Now, Murphy," he bellowed, as Murphy couched his pike, and pushed down his hat and knit his brows to darkness. Shawn-a-Gow's right side was turned to the executioner; his black, distorted face, to the weapon upon which he should cast his victim; he stood firmly on his divided legs, in the attitude that enabled him to exert all his strength in the toss he contemplated; when Sir William Judkin, hitherto held back by a wish perhaps to allow all vicissitudes of suffering to visit his detested rival, sternly stepped between the writhing man and his fate.

"Stop, Delouchery!" he said, in a deep, impressive voice; and before the smith could express his astonishment or rage at the interruption,—"stop!" he said again, in higher accents; "this man," —scowling as he used the term of contempt—"this man must be given into my hands—I must kill him;"—he continued in a whisper close at Shawn's ear—"I must kill him myself."

"Why so?" growled the smith.

"He is the murderer of my father-in-law."

"People here has just as good a right to him," answered Shawn-a-Gow surlily, much vexed at the interruption he had experienced, and scarce able to stay his hand from its impulse:

"here's Pat Murphy, an' he hung the only born brother iv him: and Murphy must have a pike through Talbot: *I* had one through Whaley."

"And he shall. But, Delouchery, listen farther: Talbot has forced off my wife—has her concealed from me—Sir Thomas Hartley's daughter: after murdering the father, he would destroy the child—and that child my wife. Before he dies I must force him to confess where she is to be found—and then Murphy and I for it, between us."

"I'll soon force out iv him, for you, where the wife is."

"No, Delouchery—he will tell nothing here."

"An' where will you bring him to make him tell?"

"Only to yonder field, at the bottom of the hill."

The smith paused, and seemed resolving the proposition in all its points. He cast his eyes around. "Mollony, come here—Farrell, come here," he said. Two men advanced from the interior of the prison.

"Where's the rope that tied the Orangemen that cum into the camp from Benclody?"

"It's to the good for another job, Capt'n."

Without farther explanation, he forced Captain Talbot backward into the prison; reappeared with him, his hands tied behind his back; gave the end of the rope into Sir William Judkin's hand; then he called Murphy aside, and, in a whisper of few words, directed him to accompany "Curnel Judkin," an' give him a helping hand, or watch him close, as the case might seem to demand: and then turning to the Baronet, "There he's for you now; an' have a care an' do the business well."

It would be difficult to divine what were Captain Talbot's feelings when he recognised the strange interference between him and his terrible doom. The first emphatic words addressed by Sir William Judkin to Shawn-a-Gow told nothing of his real design, although they certainly proclaimed his wish to save his rival from immediate death. The subsequent part of the conversation between the Baronet and the smith was begun by the former in a whisper, and followed up by the latter, while he held the subject of it at arm's length, in a low, inaudible growl: so that Talbot could only suspect its import. And if his still pallid features told the secrets of his mind, he did indeed suspect; for, mixed with the horror which had lately been their sole expression, eager inquiry, doubt, and trembling solicitude, now alternately possessed them.

He was silent, however; and by the time that he descended the hill-side, guarded at one shoulder by his rival, who held the end of the rope which strongly tied him, and at the other by Murphy, who still clutched the weapon he had just couched for his death, Captain Talbot seemed collected, too.

The last slanting rays of the setting sun shot upward against

the slope of the eminence, as the victim and his escort strode down to its base; and although that brilliant beam can turn to a mass of vermilion and gold the most unsightly vapour which hangs in the heavens, or fling a glowing interest over objects the most rude or uncouth in themselves, it could not make less horrible the horrors of the steep hill-side. Suddenly, the burning orb sank from view behind the distant curvings of the extensive panorama spreading all around, and night began to fall, more appropriately to hide what the glorious summer-evening only rendered frightfully distinct.

As was generally the case amongst the insurgent multitudes, such of the occupants of the rude camp as had cabins to repair to, were now bending from the hill to pass the night under a roof; while others, and those by far the greater number, stretched themselves by some rock, or patch of furze, to sleep beneath the twinkling of the stars. The work of death ceased for a time. With an approach towards military usage, the leaders were placing sentinels at different distances, to give notice of any approach of the enemy, and imparting to them some oddly-sounding and fantastic watchword. The cooking-fires sank down, and comparative stillness reigned over the barren extent that had so lately sounded to the shouts of carousal, to the screams of agony, and to the fierce clamour of maddened passions.

And amid this altered aspect of the savage scene, Sir William Judkin and Captain Talbot entered, through a gap in its fence, a lonesome field, northward from the base of Vinegar Hill. It may seem a subject for inquiry why the Baronet thus chose to convey his prisoner to a spot so solitary, and so far removed from observation; but men bent upon any fearful act will, perhaps unconsciously, select a fit place to do it in. And Sir William might have had some vague idea of the kind, as he strode towards this remote field, holding a stern silence, during which he probably nerved himself for the coming event, and pulling, at every step, the end of his victim's manacle; and his notions of an appropriate situation, and of the conduct he was to pursue, might have together been arrived at, when, in about the middle of the waste ground, he suddenly halted, whirled short upon Talbot, raised his person high, as he struck the end of his pike-staff into the sod, and then leaning on the weapon, and glaring a cool though deep glance from beneath his meeting brows, at last broke the long silence.

"Talbot, where is my wife?" His tones were not loud, yet they sounded fiercely distinct.

"*Your wife?*" repeated Talbot expressively, as he returned his rival's stare; and his voice wanted little of the rigid composure of that in which he had been addressed, while it seemed an echo as well of the Baronet's cadence as of his words.

The querist started; perhaps at the recognition of a resolved

mood, cool as his own, when something more to his purpose was naturally to have been expected in Talbot's situation.

"Heaven and earth!—do you only repeat my question? Have you heard it distinctly?"

"Yes, distinctly."

"And will not answer it?

"No."

"No?—I have saved your life!"

"That is yet to be shown."

"How?—how, better than I have already shown it?"

"Set me at liberty."

"You would do so in my situation?"

Talbot was silent. Sir William repeated his question.

"I will make no reply."

"You need not. I know well in what manner you would use over me the power I now have over you."

"If so, pass the subject."

"Talbot, still you can bribe me to set you free. Speak but a few words, and I cut this rope, and give you safeguard beyond the last insurgent outpost."

"Propose the words."

"First—I again demand—where is my wife?"

"You mean, Sir Thomas Hartley's daughter?"

"Be it so: how have you disposed of her?"

"Still I must decline to answer you."

"Well, this at least, this—" Sir William began to tremble, while his captive remained self-possessed, and he hissed a question into Talbot's ear.

"No!" was the quick answer: "No! she is yet, what she has ever been, innocent as the angel inhabitant of Heaven!"

"Swear it!—swear by the Eternal Ruler of the Universe, who, in the silence of this night, listens to record your oath; and, Talbot, to record it for you, or against you."

"By that Great Judge, before whom in a few seconds I may appear, I swear it!"

"Well—I believe you; for, Talbot, could you, without peril to your eternal lot, answer me otherwise—otherwise I had been answered."

Sir William's voice sank low, expressing the relief his feelings experienced, and for a moment his head drooped towards his breast: but suddenly he raised it to its former fierce elevation.

"Villain!—and you have well and truly judged my character—you dared not suppose I could drag you here, bound in a felon rope, at my mercy, and not kill you; kill you—ay! and your last answer has sealed your doom! Murderer, miscreant, fool!—yes, fool!—your death now becomes necessary—now here—this instant, inevitable, to hinder you from accomplishing over me the triumph

you have not yet attained: you know me, and I know you; yet, with all the stains upon your accursed name, I can credit your oath, and you die, that you may not disentitle yourself to repeat it."

"And do not you suppose," retorted Talbot, still seemingly echoing the tones in which he was addressed—"do not you suppose that, after understanding your character and your nature, I had expected mercy at your hands when I gave that answer?—and call me not fool, for, fool, at least, you do not believe I am. You know that, from your first interference on the top of the hill, I read your purpose; that I did not dream of averting it by my reply to a question worthy of you; that all along I expected you would coolly shed my blood;—now point your pike at once, and rid me of your abhorred company!"

"Ay?"—laughed out Sir William Judkin, at last fully excited—"ay! by the spacious heavens above us!—and I feared—I trembled at the thought that any other man than myself might have a share in killing you. You saw me whisper and motion from us, ere we entered this field, the man who, on account of the murder of his beloved brother, through your agency, pretends to dispute the right with me: I bribed him to leave us together for a moment; had he refused, I would have earned the opportunity of dealing with you alone, by first stretching him at my feet. No hand but this—this—shall dare to let forth one drop of your blood—for it is all mine—mine every little atom!"

"The Lord have mercy on my soul!" said Talbot solemnly, and now not without emotion;—"Oh, well I know it—the least animal knows its natural murderer; and I—could I mistake you?—The Lord have mercy on my soul!" he repeated in an exhausted voice, and yet in such fervour of appeal as a courageous man assumes when, though taking a farewell of this life, he can cast forward a strong look into eternity—"The Lord have mercy on my soul!" he said, for the third time.

"And," resumed Sir William Judkin, in his former strain of loud exultation—"I could satisfy a sceptic, if he dared to raise a doubt, of my fair, my indisputable claim to every bubble that courses round your heart!"

"I ask but one minute's liberty to kneel," interrupted Talbot, evidently not attending to the last words—"hold the rope more at length, and only let me kneel."

"First hear me," answered his rival, twining it yet another coil round his left-hand, while he grasped the pike in his right. "Even to yourself I will recite the grounds of my exclusive proprietorship in your life, and gainsay them if you can"—his high voice sank ominously low:—"you dared to cross my love—you dared to raise your eyes to the very lady I had wooed and won—you leagued and plotted with a common ruffian to murder me—you sent him to waylay me—upon the felon gallows, hanging like a

dog, you watched the last agonies of my father-in-law—by perjury you contrived his fate, and by perjury you would have doomed me to the same death of ignominy——Next, with the hands that all but strangled her father, you tore away my wife, and you now refuse to render her back to me, or to discover the place of her imprisonment. But,—his voice sank lower still—"but, Talbot, the deadliest item is to be told—you dared, too—"

Sir William stopped, for the footsteps of Murphy sounded near, as he said,—"Thundher an' fire, Curnel! will you keep him talkin' all the night long?—Let me have my share o' the work, till I be goin'."

"Here, Murphy," cried Sir William, speaking rapidly—"what value do you set on your revenge against this man?"

"What value duv I—what?" asked the gaping fellow, as he endeavoured to comprehend the question.

"Sir, take these two guineas," rejoined Sir William eagerly; "take them, and leave him to me—I would have no partner in putting him to death."

"Och, by the hokey!" replied Murphy, and he could say no more, for still he was not able to understand why he should get so considerable a bribe.

"Or, if you persist,"—Sir William burst into a rage—"I will first kill you, and then stretch him upon your body!—Begone, I say!"

"An' is id to go away, your honour is givin' the good money?"

"Yes—I would purchase from you the sole privilege of taking vengeance upon him."

"That's as much as to say you'll pike him yourself, widout any body to help you?"

"Ay!" cried Sir William exultingly—"pike him while an inch can quiver!"

"Well, I wish you loock, Curnel: the only spite I have to 'im is on the head o' the poor brether o' me; but sence you say you'll do id for the both iv us, at oncet, an' do it so well, into the bargain, sure, there's no differ betuxt us;—good-night!"

"Leave me! quick, quick!"

"Och, as quick as you plase: to tell the blessed truth, I had only half a heart for id in the night-time, this a-way, an' in this ugly, lonesome place, whatever I'd do by the light o' the sun:" and the man plodded towards the hill, wondering much at the fancy of "the Curnel," who, "it was asy enough to see, thought the pike-exercise to be great fun, when he'd give two yellow guineas to have id all to himself, an' be ready to ate one up in a bit, jest for not takin' 'em at the first offer."

"And now, Talbot," said Sir William Judkin, "we are quite alone; prepare yourself—you stand here my bound and manacled victim, and I will slay you."

"Finish the last charge you were about to make against me, when your fellow-murderer interrupted us," replied Talbot.

"No, Talbot—not now—I perceive it would gratify you, and I will not. You know my meaning,—that is sufficient."

"Then, even of you, I can crave a last boon—one already preferred—let me kneel down."

"Ay, there—" he held the rope at its full length, so that Talbot could, without struggling, gain the position he wished;—"it tallies with my humour—I am unwilling to spare you one pang: kneel—look your last at the bright stars,—think your last thought of her whom you leave behind to my love, and to my triumph over you,—fully feel what it is to die by the hand of an exulting rival, in youth, in hope, and—a few hours ago—almost his conqueror; —I can kill you but once; and the torments these thoughts must give you, will prolong, in anticipation, to my heart, the positive enjoyment of the final act. Nor dare to build a lying comfort upon the hope of my not discovering the place to which you have forced her. Fool! I call you so again, fool! I will find my wife—ay, my wife, Talbot, if she yet lives upon the surface of the earth!"

Captain Talbot had quickly availed himself of the permission to fall upon his knees. For a moment he seemed occupied in mental prayer, his eyes turned upward; then he suddenly broke forth aloud.

"I have fearful things to answer for at thy Judgment Seat—in thy mercy, accept my present repentance, on the verge of an early and fearful death. And O Almighty Father of my being! if the prayer of a wretched sinner can ascend into thy presence, give ear to my last earthly petition: permit not the approach of my base murderer to the mistress of my heart! stretch forth thy interposing arm between them: shield her, save her!—thou wilt, O God, thou wilt! I feel the comfort of thy promise in my soul! Unworthy as I am, my prayer has been heard!" He started to his feet, as quickly as his pinioned arms would permit him, and addressed Sir William Judkin—"Yes! I have had a view into futurity. The spirit of prophecy is upon me. You can slaughter me; but listen—never, never, will you enjoy her smiles from whom you thus separate me! Never will her white arms clasp my murderer's neck! And I leave her but a little time before you—you, too, must sink into an early and ignominious grave; and during your short sojourn upon earth, my watchful spirit, hovering over your most secret steps, will still protect my beloved mistress from your touch!"

"This, then, to free you for your mission!" exultingly cried Sir William Judkin. While Talbot spoke, he had gradually shortened the pike-handle in his grasp, and pointed its head to his victim's breast, and with cool and deadly certainty he was making the push forward, when he felt the weapon seized behind him, and

forcibly tugged backward. At the same instant, both his arms were secured, and the pistol, which he had thrust into his bosom, was snatched from him by a woman's hand, and that woman the same through whose agency he had escaped from the castle of Enniscorthy.

While he struggled desperately to force himself out of the grasp of two strong men, each of whom held separately one of his arms, the woman cut asunder Captain Talbot's bonds: and, "Now!" she said, in the same impressive voice which on a former occasion had startled Sir William Judkin; "now, Talbot, fly: for you are free to fly! Pause not an instant: your eye tells the vengeance you would in turn take upon him—but dare not to injure a hair of his head! If I have saved him from the guilt of shedding your blood, I can and will farther save him from death or injury at your hands, —fly, and do not parley: fly while you are not prevented!"

"We meet again!" cried Captain Talbot, walking close up to his rival; and then he made use of his freedom, and left the spot.

"And *we have* met again!" said the woman, also confronting Sir William, the moment Talbot had departed.

"Fiend from hell!" exclaimed the Baronet, madly renewing his struggles, and now more successful than at first. One arm was disengaged, and with its clenched hand he struck his second captor to the ground, and bounded backward at full liberty, catching up the pike that had been forced from him, and then flung upon the grass.

"Perish, wretch! whoever you are!" he continued, darting his weapon at the man he had just felled; and the faint exclamation of his victim was cut short by the flutter of his last breath.

"And now!" glaring around for another prey, but the second man had disappeared; and the woman stood on the fence of the field, crying out after him—"Stand, coward!—come back, or he escapes me!—I will not fire upon him, and alone I cannot secure him!" Ere she had done speaking, Sir William had closely approached her, with the stealthy stride of the wild Indian creeping upon his foe;—the rustle of the grass under his feet caused her to turn; when she saw him so near, a suppressed scream escaped her, and she jumped down, and was hid from his view by the fence.

Eagerly he sprang after her: in his haste, and perhaps on account of the exhausted state of his frame, his foot slipped, and he fell backward. Regaining his feet, with curses and imprecations, he stood, at a second effort, outside the field. A figure rapidly made way towards the town, along a narrow pathway leading from the base of Vinegar-hill, and he believed they were a woman's garments which fluttered on the light breeze. Sir William pursued with his utmost speed, still keeping the fugitive in view; but at a particular point, the pathway ran between rising grounds, which deeply shadowed it, and there the moving object escaped

his eye. Footsteps, however, still sounded before him, and he did not relax his speed; they grew fainter, and he summoned all his strength even to increase it: they suddenly ceased, and he stopped, panting and staggering, to look around. He had passed the narrow track leading from Enniscorthy to the hill; he was in the ruined suburb which had been consumed upon the day of the late attack; silence reigned through all the black desolation that surrounded him, and no living creature appeared in view.

"I am lost," he muttered, keenly aroused to a sense of the disappointments of the last half-hour—"on every side lost: hell and earth league against me!" and furiously shouting, as if in defiance of the faintness he felt approaching, Sir William sank upon the ground: overstrained nature could no longer bear up against the fatigue and the agitation he had for nearly three days and nights endured.

CHAPTER IX.

It is not with us always a matter of choice that we present before the reader pictures of human passion and excess, which, we are aware, may inspire some tyro-critic, whom they instruct in the secrets of his fellow-creatures, with a hint, whispered over the shoulders of such of our patrons as, like the indolent Gray, read new novels on sofas. But we paint from the people of a land, amongst whom, for the last six hundred years, national provocations have never ceased to keep alive the strongest, and often the worst passions of our nature; whose pauses,—during that long lapse of a country's existence,—from actual conflict in the field, have been but so many changes into mental strife; and who, to this day, are held prepared, should the war-cry be given, to rush at each other's throats, and enact scenes that, in the columns of a newspaper,

> ("That folio of four pages, happy work!
> Which not even critics criticise,")

would show more terribly vivid than in these chapters any selected by us, from former facts, for the purposes of candid though slight illustration.

Necessity, then, rather than choice, sometimes compels us to exhibit individuals and occurrences proper to the community that supplies originals for our study. We do not portray the minds, the hearts, the habits, the manners, or the acts of a tranquillized and a happy people; least of all do we portray the quiet and passionless decorum which can only result from a well-knit, long-confirmed, prosperous, and perhaps selfish state of society.

If, therefore, some critic as has before been mentioned, occasionally object to us the extravagance of our delineation, or the harshness of our colouring, his quarrel is with human nature, and, it may be, with human policy, and not with us.

Should he invariably grow pale, or get ill, at sketches of natural passions, and at the character they form, or the events they produce, then, indeed, we would admit his quarrel to be personal, as regards ourselves; yet, for all that, we could not afford to administer to his washy, water-colour taste, by wholly withdrawing our eyes from those sublime objects of moral study, which, above all others, stamp breadth and depth upon the artist's canvass.

Still it is, to ourselves, rather a painful labour than a plesant relaxation, when we are obliged to go through some scenes we would gladly leave unnoticed; and, on the contrary, it is truly gratifying when, as is now about to be the case, we can consistently drop into company with certain of our characters, from whom we need apprehend no furious ebullitions of passion, and no wild aggression against the species to which we all belong.

We have to recur to Hartley Court, and describe some events which occurred in that desolate mansion immediately after Sir William Judkin left it, upon the night of his escape from the castle of Enniscorthy. The old spirit-broken butler listened to the galloping clatter of Sir William's horse, until the sounds died away in the distance, and then slowly quitted the stable-yard and re-entered the house.

His aged wife, the housekeeper, and Nanny the Knitter, were seated in the kitchen,—the one holding her dotted apron to her eyes, as she rocked backward and forward; the other occupying, even under existing circumstances, a certain "cricket stool," which, during her many visits, she had always considered her proper throne. Invariably, indeed, upon her arrival to share the warmth of the kitchen-fire in Hartley Court, Nanny would look about for this article of furniture, and when asked to be seated, reply, "Yes, wid a heart-and-a-half, my honey pet, an' bless the providhers for the *cooramuch** fire, but I don't see my stool any where" (although she could point out its possessor); and this declaration of partiality for "her stool" never passed unheeded; and she would carry it to the corner close to "the hob," and when

* Snug.

established upon it, become president of the gossip for the evening. On the present occasion, however, although occupying her usual post, little appearance of former comfort was to be seen even in Nanny's corner. When oppressed by extreme misery, people grow indifferent to those little external arrangements which confer upon their dwellings and persons a character of cheeriness. Something within the mind insinuates, "I do not care to attend to such matters now,—let them remain as they are." The fire had burnt down in the large kitchen-grate; many of the culinary utensils were in disorder; a chair, or a form, remained upset, no one caring to put it upright; or each saying, perhaps, "It may lie there, for the masther is down too;" a solitary candle, only half illuminating the spacious and arched apartment, was allowed to flare on without trimming, until the drooping wick ate into its side; and a very old black cat, who, from the hour of her birth, had never before needed to approach, for her perfect enjoyment, nearer than some feet to the fire, now sat but half asleep in its ashes.

Yet, comfortless as was the appearance of the kitchen, the old butler and his wife preferred to occupy it upon this evening, rather than sit in their own room, where, they said, "they had no right to sit any longer, now that their masther was gone." No other persons were inmates of the desolate house. It became necessary, that none who could not strictly be depended upon should learn the place of concealment into which the plate was to be removed; and a consultation ensued between the projectors of the important scheme, and, at Nanny's suggestion, many of the inferior domestics were sent away from Hartley Court. Two females, who could not without strong cause be summarily disposed of, supplied good reason to the housekeeper for their immediate dismissal, by attempting, amid the general confusion and dismay, to pilfer some valuable articles. Timothy Reily, as is known, had been apprehended along with his master; and three of his male fellow-servants, who were refused admission, as evidences for Sir Thomas, at the gate of the castle of Enniscorthy, only returned to the house to communicate the intelligence, together with that of the Baronet's conviction, and then set off, infuriated, to join the insurgents, and revenge his death upon the party they considered as his murderers.

Long after the butler's return to the kitchen, silence continued between the sad trio. Nanny at last spoke.

"Misthress Flannigan, my honey, the darlin' iv a Sir William is heart-scalded—the Lord look down upon him, poor crature, this blessed an' holy night!"

Nanny had never been distinguished for any great ardency of feeling. Since her husband's death little had occurred to arouse the passion of grief within her equable breast: all went on well with her; free from trouble, and certain that the morrow would find

her as welcome a visitant amongst her neighbours as she had ever been, she saw her weasel-skin purse gradually distending to portion off her only daughter; and when that daughter was addressed by a "daler,' from the town of Ross,—a middle-aged man, who had come into Nanny's district to make purchases in the way of his traffic,—and when she visited his remote establishment, found it "snug," and consequently agreed that her Nancy should become its mistress, the old woman remained without care of any kind. For twenty years she had shed no tear on her own account; it could, therefore, scarce be expected that she should weep much over the sorrows of others. And, in truth, though generally present amid the domestic griefs of all in her neighbourhood, none ever reckoned on seeing her join the mourning wail. It was only calculated that her constant habits of bending her minute mind to determine what was best to be done under every change of circumstances, would give them the advantage of her care and guidance of affairs, which they were too much afflicted to look after; and, for Nanny's own part, her predominant spirit of curiosity, and her trade of intermeddling in other people's concerns, supplied abundant excitement,—even denying her all claims to benevolence, which we by no means do,—for exertions invariably presumed on, and seldom unprofitably undertaken. Upon the present unparalleled occasion, however, she felt the necessity of making a show of sympathy with the weeping domestics. It was something like a mumbling, ill-finished attempt at a moaning sound, which she sent forth, moving her head from right to left as its accompaniment; and thus she prefaced the observation we have just recorded; and when the tears and real sobs of her auditors came afresh at the associations of complicated misery her words quickly started, still Nanny could contribute no more than her gurgling noise, and the mechanical motion of her strangely attired head.

"An' the poor disthracted barrowknight is gone back wid himself to Enniscorthy, Misthress Flannigan, my honey," she continued.

"I fear so," said the butler—"Where they will soon hang him, as well as my poor masther. Och! och! see what a world it is, an' what people is in id! Where's the one 'ud think, this day twelvemonth, that Square Capt'n Talbot, that used to get his bit an' his sup amost every day undher this poor roof, an' be walkin' out, in the mornin' an' in the evenin', wid the purty Miss Eliza,—Lady Eleezabeth Judkin, barrowknight, that is now,—that he'd be the man to bring all this trouble on his good benefacthers."

"I never was desaved by him," said the housekeeper; "he was a black, forbiddin'-lookin' young man, except when he put on the smiles for my darlin' young lady. May ill fortune, as black as his looks an' his heart, sthrew his road every day he sees the light! An' Sir William Judkin, the honey pet, who 'd think he could be

sich a wicked gintleman,—him that once an' always had the good-humour on his hansome face;—an' sure, it was all as one as a thing done, out-an'-out, when he swore he'd pitch me from the winder, blessed be the Heavens!"

"He can't be blamed,—sure, what happened was enough to turn any Christian saint into a madman;—but, ah! the Lord purtect us! what a thraitor-way the other went to work!" said Mrs. Flannigan.

"A man that's crassed," resumed Nanny, "listens to ould Nick's whispers, an' sure, he whispered the worst o' bad thoughts into the ould sweetheart's head:—bud stop," cried the acute-eared old woman—"isn't there some one thryin to get in? Did you boult the passage-dour, comin' back from the stables, Misther Flannigan, my honey?"

"No," replied the butler, alarmed at the recollection; "I forgot id in my throuble."

"Well, wait here," said the intrepid Knitter;—"put the candle undher the biler, an' I'll stale asy, an' thry to boult it for you."

A passage led to a door opening into the back-yard, and along its sides were other doors communicating with other apartments—the housekeeper's-room, the larder, the pantry, the servants'-hall, and servants' bed-chambers. Through this passage Nanny, "widout makin' mooch noise wid her feet," alertly glided. Recollecting the apartment into which Sir William Judkin had burst his way, she stopped a moment to turn the key in the back-door that opened into it; and then, as well acquainted as the old black cat in the kitchen, with every step she should take, continued her progress in the dark.

The noise which had at first alarmed her was but indistinctly heard, having occurred at the front of the house; but, to her consternation, as she approached the back-door, the heavy latch was raised, and persons quickly entered. She couched by the wall, near enough to hear some of their conversation, and the deeply-impressed tones of one of the speakers made her shiver with terror, for they were the same that once, under a certain lime-tree, when Nanny was detected in evesdropping, had threatened her with annihilation if she should ever again be similarly encountered.

"All right, Sam!" said the voice;—"we're in, as sure as the Divil is in Rathdowny—an' I b'lieve that's a thing there's little doubt about. Are the other boys comin'?—we must put a face on id, an' lay id all at the dour o' Whaley's yeomen."

"They're thryin at the shetthers abrood," answered he of the wooden-leg; "I'll have 'em in to you, wid a hop-step-an'-jump."

Nanny heard Sam pass out into the yard: to hide herself was now her only thought. It was a case of life and death to her;—self only could be considered. She did not, therefore, dream of stealing back with any intelligence to the kitchen, but glided into

the housekeeper's room near at hand, so noiselessly, that even the acute and listening ear of Bill Nale heard not a stir.

In this room was a very large chest, such as may yet be found in the possession of Irish housewives of the middling class, who keep under one lock their wardrobe, their linen, their important papers, and sundry articles of value: and beneath its massive lid Mrs. Flannigan, sharing her husband's cares and duties, had deposited the plate belonging to Hartley Court, bedding it upon a quantity of house-linen. The reader is aware that, previous to Sir William Judkin's visit to the house upon this evening, the old butler, his wife, and Nanny the Knitter, had been employed in conveying the treasure to a place of concealment. His loud knocking interrupted their task, and sent them to seek hiding-holes for themselves, but not before the greater number of the valuable articles had been safely disposed of. A few spoons, a pair of candlesticks, and some such matters, they did abandon, however, to the supposed intruders; and in their haste and panic also forgot to close the chest. The latter fact Nanny particularly recollected as she crept across the room. By some extraordinary contrivance she got into the place of refuge she had contemplated, pulled down the lid "azy, azy;" it was fastened by a spring-lock, which instantly shot home; and Nanny as instantly recollected that she was now a prisoner, perhaps for a longer time than she had reckoned on.

Indeed, after vainly trying to raise the lid again, this thought startled the old dame almost out of her sense of the danger she had incarcerated herself to avoid;—but some noise through the house soon recalled her superior terrors of her persecutor; and then came the assurance of perfect obscuration from his dreaded eye; and she crouched down upon her couch of linen, quite resigned even to protracted imprisonment, since by it she could escape the dark fate Bill Nale had, under certain conditions, promised her.

With one ear at the keyhole, and her mouth wide open, as if through it also she hoped to admit sound, and her old withered heart smiting her ribs so forcibly that she could hear every blow, Nanny listened for a considerable time. At first, the noise through the house sank into silence; then it arose again, faintly and remote, however, to her gaping ear; then a second time died away; and delusive Hope, who deceives, it may safely be asserted, as often as she points to reality, whispered through the only breathing-hole of her prison, that Nanny had indeed escaped the fangs of the person whom, above all others, in the world, she had reason to fear.

Her heart moderated its assaults against her ribs. She stretched herself at full length on her couch, with something like a return of her usual sensations of comfort; but, alas! the clamour of voices,

and the stamping of feet, now arose nearer than before; they echoed through the vaulted passage leading to the room in which she had taken shelter; closer and closer they came, until at last, with sensations almost of dissolution, with failing breath and a steaming frame, she heard the door flung open, and persons rudely enter.

"Where have you put the pikes to hide, you old Crop?—The house was full of 'em—we must find 'em afore we quit," said a voice, which, even under the disguise of an assumed tone, the wretched Knitter knew to be that of her enemy. And she at once guessed, recollecting the words she had before overheard in the passage, that he and his associates had assumed the garb of yeomen, in order to commit plunder with impunity. Such indeed was the case. The disguise could easily be obtained, nothing more being necessary than to strip the dead bodies of the loyal soldiers slain during the last few days; and by these means Nale and his gang came fully caparisoned as the king's adherents.

"I have never looked on a pike since I was born, gentlemen—never, I declare honestly; and there is not such a thing in the house, to my knowledge."

"Ay, a purty story, that the ould Croppy wouldn't have the darthers ready for his men. What's in this big chest, you papish thief?"

"Only some linen."

Nanny fervently wished the assertion were true.

"We'll soon know that;—open id, this moment;—ay, it's the very chest we were tould to look for 'em in."

A pause ensued. Nanny then heard Nale say something in a growling accent, but his words escaped her; and then the old butler, speaking in a high voice, declared he had not the key, but would go to seek it.

It is in vain we have put down our pen in the hope of selecting terms sufficiently forcible to describe Nanny's feelings, when she learned that the lid of her prison was to be raised, and her person revealed to view. It appeared evident that Bill Nale expected to find a treasure in the chest—and oh! what would be his rage, when he should discover only a miserable, trembling old woman, upon whom, without this additional cause for revenge, but merely as punishment for again meeting her in the character and situation of a listener to his private discourse, he had sworn to inflict a horrid death—in fact, for well did Nanny remember his words—"the death of an ould cat?" And if ever an "ould cat," past the days of forgiveness, felt beside herself with the terror of coming fate, when detected in the larder by the cook, devouring the rare morsel destined, above every thing else, to grace his master's table—if ever such poor offender gave herself up for lost, as the white-capped man of dishes, shutting the door behind him, entered

just in time to scare her from the last mouthful of her meal—damning evidence of how the rest had been disposed of—and then, glaring alternately at the tell-tale fragment of the delicacy and at the detected glutton, advanced, knife in hand, upon her—if, not daring to lick her lips in his presence, the cringing puss may be said to have experienced dreadful qualms of horror, more violent, even than her sensations, were at this moment those of the unfortunate Nanny.

She had raised herself, resting on one hand, to listen to the intruders. Now, with a very low but utterly despairing groan, she twisted her person around, sank on her knees and elbows, rested her teeming forehead on her death-cold hands, and—as she afterwards described it, when we questioned her on her state of mind during this severe trial—"her ould heart riz up to the root iv her tongue, an' she could count every ugh, ugh, ugh, it gave there, as plain as that"—rapping her knuckles against a table—"an' it went as fast too, my honey,"—and she repeated the knocks, about three to a second—"an' it was the very most I could do to keep swallyin id down, or into the poor mouth o' me it 'ud jump, purtect the hearers."

"Listen, Sam," said Rattling Bill, speaking, while the butler remained away, in his own undisguised voice, as he gave the chest a shake which caused the few articles of plate inside to jingle, and sadly discomposed the position of the poor prisoner.

"By the deed, an' sure the lob is in id," answered Sam.

"What keeps ould Flannigan?" asked another voice, "hadn't we betther break it open? The daylight 'll soon be comin'."

"Did you tackle the horse an' cart, as I bid you, Sam?" questioned Nale.

"It's ready, upon my word."

"Well—the dawn is breakin,' sure enough—an' it wouldn't do to be caught by the pikemen wid the king's coats on us," resumed Bill; "curse o' Cromwell on the day! where is id comin' so soon?—But bear a hand here, my hearties, an' we'll whip chest an' all away, hoize it on the cart in the yard, smash it to bits in some soft place, an' then ye may burn the *skeuchs** an' spill out the *murphies*† on silver dishes all the rest o' your lives."

"That's the plan o' plans, by the deed!" concurred Sam; "so, come."

The men surrounded the chest; and there was a general "here!" given in that long cadence which is the signal for simultaneous exertion. One end of it was raised, and Nanny slipped down to the other;—"here again!" the men piped, and she felt herself lifted up.

"It's mortial heavy," observed one.

"Hah!" laughed Nale, "that's the sign an' token that there's

* Osier strainers. † Potatoes.

choicer stuff than feathers inside iv it. Listen again," as the plate continued to jingle; "there's nate music, I b'lieve—nater nor the best o' pipes ever played; 'silver an' goold to thee I give,' says the priest."—

The subdued laugh that followed this jocularity sounded at Nanny's ear as does the giggle of his torturer's to the benumbed yet terrified senses of the wretch who, in that not unreal state of suffering called night-mare, fancies himself gasping under the fantastic inflictions of a score of fiends.

As Sam had engaged, a cart and horse stood in the yard ready to receive the much-prized but ill-understood load. The groaning carriers laid their fardel on the cart; and Nanny judged, if judgment she could pretend to form, that a conversation ensued in very low tones between four persons. Then the cart went for some time rapidly along, over a rough road; and many a jolt did she get, and often did her poor head come in rude contact with the sides and ends of her moving dungeon. Then she concluded that the way became still more difficult; for Nanny could feel that she travelled very slowly.

And during this slackened progress she caught—very unwillingly, for the first time in her life—the continuation of a dialogue held between Nale and Sam, as they sat at different sides of the chest, and spoke in loud accents over it. From the free and confidential manner in which they interchanged some important opinions and allusions, Nanny concluded that they were now alone with their prize, and alas! unsuspicious of the near espionage of that individual whom, above all that breathed, Nale had formerly seemed unwilling to admit into his secrets; and agony came with the thought, that this involuntary offence would surely add, at the proper moment, ruthless determination to Bill's revenge upon her person.

"By my deed an' conscience!" said Sam, "it was the hoith o' good loock that put him in your road."

"Hah!—an' never mind one me for not missin' the wind fall. Never fear Bill Nale for makin' his milch-cow o' the rock o' sense, as people thinks Square Talbot to be. You know well, Sammy, we never want a shiner while his purse has a cross in id."

"Threw enough, Bill; but who'd think that he'd turn out sich a scape-grace, as well as sich a fool;—he that all the world, too, took for a civil, honest fellow entirely."

"By the livin' farmer! I couldn't think it of him myself, the first time I come across him;—an' it isn't all out plain to me that I didn't bite him, widout knowin' id, some day or other, since we happened to be such friends together."

"Bud, betuxt yoursef an' mysef, Billy, honey, isn't id a raal wondher, an' a thing widout sense in id, how he could go to turn hangman upon Square Hartley?"

"No wondher at all, though I won't deny you what you say

about the sense o' the matther;—it's my notion he'd go, neck-an'-heels, into the roastin'-pit;—you know where I mane, or, at laste you'll know id one o' these days—but I b'lieve he'd stand a week's fryin' in that place, jest to have a smile from Square Hartley's daughther the week afther; an' he couldn't get near her, by hook or by crook, while the father lived. Why, Sam, if you seen how he bounced up when I showed him my crans for noosin' the old barrowknight;—though, by the piper! Sam, I never done a thing that went so hard aginst my grain as that; he was a raal gintleman, so he was;—bud, when the marriage come about, I couldn't do what I had to do any other way;—an' they have to blame themselves; I tould 'em to dhrop the business, an' they wouldn't."

"Who did you warn on the head iv id?"

"I sent a message to the daughther hersef, by that ould Tory, Nanny the Knitther; bud it isn't clear to me that she said my words right fornent Miss Hartley;—no matther—wait till we do what's in hand, an' then, maybe, I'd clap my paw on the ould thramper."

Nanny felt no increase of comfort in her chest.

"An' you helped Square Talbot so bravely, Bill, to lock up the sweetheart at last?"

The listener experienced, for an instant, some little interest apart from her own absorbing situation.

"Yes, we done that for 'im, an' we done id hansome; she went wid hearty good-will, thinkin', by the hokey frost! that she was goin' to meet the poor father;—bud she must thravel a longer road afore she sees him agin."

"An' what road did she thravel that prasent time?"

"Jest to Square Talbot's new house, that's near Dunbrody. You know id, Sam; it's on the hoigth afore you cross the pill, goin' to the ould abbey; an' he's only waitin' till we have the mackerony iv a husband she got the other day berred snug in the little church; an' then he'll make her marry him, in spite iv all the world. Them women are the divils, out-an'-out, Sammy, an' well I know id; there isn't a livin' man on Ireland's ground able for Bill Nale; bud ever since the day he was born, one woman or another crowed over him; an' I b'lieve that's a curiosity. First, there was the ould, cross-grained mother o' me from the black North;—well, she went her road, an' I thought I was a free man; but then, the duoul puts id into the proud heart o' that great lady iv a wife I had to take a notion o' me, an' quit her father's grand house on a pillion at my back, when you and I, Sam, forged the *rhaumaush* of a story about my gettin' her from the fairies, that all the sensible neighbours gave ear to."—

"Yes, by my deed! an' a nate, pleasant story it was; bud her fine ladyship didn't stick to you long, Billy, my boy."

"By the hokey frost! Sam, she's dhrivin' me still,—or else another woman for her, an' that's all the same thing."

"And nothin' in the world 'll do, Bill, bud to sthretch him in Dunbrody?"

"Nothin'; 'twas the first ordhers I got, as you ought to remember, Sam, by what you saw an' hard the night big Father Rourke tuck him out iv our hands; an', by the farmer! betther he doesn't desarve, if it was only on account of his gettin' clear o' me so often. Why, only last night agin, Sam, we were cock-sure of him, when the girl let him out of Enniscorthy castle wid her own hands;—but *naubocklish*, I'll pin him, an' that soon, or I'm not Bill Nale; an' so enough said."

"Bud tell us, Bill, how is Hartley's daughther to be brought to marry the man that sthrung up her father, an' that's to have a hand in murdherin her husband!"

"How the *duoul* does Bill Nale know? or what the *duoul* does Bill Nale care? It's my own business I'm doin', Sam Stick-leg, an' not Square Talbot's; though he'd swear to any one 'ud ax him that I was workin' neck-or-nothin' for him, an' for nobody else:—well, see what fools there's in the world; an', in all my doins, the biggest fools I ever met were ever an' always chaps like him, that thought they had a power o' sense in their heads: only for one thing I'd turn round on him, at the jingle of a purse, an' let poor Hartley's daughther have the sweetheart she'd rather have; bud she must do widout him to plase one that, I tell you once agin, rules Bill Nale as hard as his ould cantankerous cripple iv a mother, or his mighty grand lady iv a wife ever did."

Nanny heard much more of the conversation of these worthies; and we had from her lips—for we found it impossible to stem her garrulity—materials sufficient to fill many additional pages; but we feel no wish to report the words of such a character as Rattling Bill Nale farther than is absolutely unavoidable.

For about an hour and a half Nanny continued to jolt along in her very uncomfortable vehicle; and although a great portion of the dialogue she overheard could not fail to impress itself upon her mind, still she never ceased to regard the unhappy circumstance of her being a listener to it, as, using her own words, an additional "nail in her coffin;" and her whole journey was therefore spent in despairing anticipations of the fate which awaited her.

Three different ways she employed herself as the cart jogged and rattled over the broken road. With her ears she took in the terrific information it was none of her wish to acquire; through her whole frame she shuddered at the inevitable death in store for her at the hands of a man who had proclaimed himself Sir William Judkin's murderer, and, almost in the same breath, marked her out as another sheep for the slaughter; and during this mixture of listening, despairing, and chattering, her lips moved with all the

rapid flippancy of long practice, and of her habitual gossiping, softly articulating, once and again, the round of prayers to which for a whole life they had been accustomed, and which they could pronounce, letter by letter, without much inconvenience to the agency of the mind, and indeed, with only a vague idea of devotion accompanying the process. More fervent, because more extemporaneous, ejaculations for mercy occasionally broke up, however, her parrot-like orisons, as some tremendous view of her doom caused her to give an extraordinary cringe, and more freely drove out the cold moisture through the pores of her fleshy forehead.

At length the cart halted. She would have preferred that it should jolt and shake her until doomsday. She and her encasement were gently shoved off the vehicle, and came with a shock to the ground; and then, scarce conscious, she expected the moment of her fate; yet, partly by an unwilled warping of her features, partly from an instinct that the most abject of all abject prayers for mercy was her sole hope, short of a miracle from above, Nanny lay, prepared for the rising of the lid, utter humility and penitence in her attitude and face, and the words of a heart-rending petition ready to burst from her lips, while the "ugh, ugh," of her heart increased to a galloping vibration.

The lid, however, was not so quickly raised. She became half aware that an unexpected pause occurred between her and her last trial. Then the voices of Nale and Sam were distinguished by her ears, at first conveying no words to the failing sense; but gradually the poor Knitter rallied into sufficient self-possession to hear what follows:—

"They ought to be here wid the hommer by this time, if they come by the short cut."

"Faix, an' so they ought—bad manners to 'em when they do come. An' I hope they'll meet their reward."

"What's the rason you say that, Sammy?" questioned Nale, with a grin of intelligence.

"By the deed, how bad they are in want of silver dishes for their praties; it's a great sin to give sich dacent things into their paws, Bill Nale."

"*Naubocklish*, if we don't have the biggest share, Sam; supposin' 'em to the foure, you an' I, lad, must get the first haul."

"Yourself, by coorse, Bill, afore me."

"Yes,—I think the first thing that's to be saized on, 'ill be Bill Nale's, any how."

"Ay, by the deed, to make pipe-stoppers of id, if you like."

All this was keen cutting to the poor "first thing that was to be saized on."

"Faix an' deed, an' we b'lieve this 'ill smash the thick schull of id, an' let us never mind the hommer," said Sam, approaching

with a large stone between his hands: "there now," laying his burden on the chest, mounting after it, and again raising and poising it over the middle of the lid,—and certainly, had he let it drop, not only would the "schull" of the massive coffer have been stove in, but the skull of our old friend along with it.

But Nale, casting his watchful eye to the brow of a neighbouring height, called out—

"Hould your hand, Sam; pitch it on the ground."

The authoritative tone of his chief, Sam durst not disobey, and the stone was accordingly flung wide of the original mark. Nanny afterwards visited the spot, and found the huge piece of rock bedded deep in the soil; and the poor old woman knelt at its side, and offered up very fervent thanksgivings, that it had not descended as was at first planned; for, if it had, it must have "made poor ould Nanny, my honey, as flat as a pancake."

"Stop, Sam; I see four or five pikemen crossin' the ridge, on their way to the croppies' camp, I'm thinkin'—jump down and hide here wid me; if they meet us in our yeoman clothes, we're gone men.

The two rascals stooped on hands and knees by the side of the chest turned from the height. Nanny piously prayed that the croppy detachment might quickly descend to the by-road with good pikes in their hands. She was disappointed. Taking off his warlike helmet, and using just one eye round the angle of her dungeon, Nale soon ascertained that the wandering peasants were passing out of view without having noticed the horse and cart, or the important article which lay near to both.

"We must jest wait for the hommer afther all," resumed Nale, when it was prudent to arise from his crouching position; "or folly me down here, for a start, Sam, an' I'll tell you more o' the matther."

Nanny heard them walk away, and the rest of their conversation was lost to her ear. But the reader may proceed after them a few steps to the brink of a sand-pit, and then down its abrupt side, until at the bottom of the excavation he hears Nale resume.

"The mornin' is too bright, Sam, to pull out the ould silver dishes in a place that many more people may soon cum upon. Besides, the young schamp I want to lay hould on is gone to Enniscorthy town, an' I must obey ordhers, and be off to keep an eye on him—an' more be token agin, you must dhrive the horse an' cart towards Dunbrody wid this other little thrunk, in no time, as I tould you last night—don't daare to look glum at me now, bud listen how it 'ill be. You see this hole—pointing almost to his feet—"where the great lob o' pikes were put to hide, afore the risin'; we'll jest shuv the chest down here, an' cover id wid the sand, an' when the night falls agin, we'll come

back an' smash it, betuxt ourselves, nate an' quiet; an' when Morrissy an' Redmond walks this way wid the hommer, expectin' their share, why they can have what the cat left o' the bacon, you know. So help a hand, Sammy, an' none o' your foolish looks, I bid you."

Nanny soon caught their returning steps. Then she became aware that, with much labour and difficulty, they dragged her and her prison some little distance forward; and then, as they allowed their lumber to find its own way to the bottom of the pit, it was well for her that it had been massively constructed, and bound with iron plates at the corners, or surely it must have burst open from the violence of its abrupt descent; and it was likewise fortunate for Nanny that she had little room to jolt from one end to the other; for, although occupying nearly the whole extent of her dark dungeon, her head and her foxy hat struck so smartly against the end which first rushed downward, that consciousness momentarily departed from her.

She regained her senses at experiencing a second terrible shock through her entire frame, caused by the sudden lowering of the chest into the deep hole to which, until the return of night, Nale had destined it. Not having heard the last communication between the two knaves, she could not remotely calculate the nature of her late hideous evolutions. In vague horror, alone, she remained just sensible of a sudden plunge from the surface of the earth; but whither, or for what purpose, was impervious and astounding mystery; for aught she could tell, the earth might have opened and swallowed her, a thousand fathom deep, or she might have fallen from its verge into the terrors of the other world.

But, after rallying her powers of observation, she soon decided that nothing so very fearful had happened to her. A dripping, grating noise sounded on the lid of—it may now be called her coffin—and once more she heard Nale saying, "A little 'll do, Sam; jest as mooch as hides the top, an' then these bushes an' briars 'll keep it berred as snug as my ould granmammy."

"Berred!"—cogitated Nanny.

"There," he continued, and the noise of throwing the sand upon her ceased—"there; that's clane and purty;—an' now come, Sam, an' we can make out a hommer for ourselves."

They left her, already stifling and gasping, to decide which death she would choose, suffocation in her premature grave, or braining with the hammer, if indeed she outlived their return, short as must be the time she concluded they would stay away. And no doubt poor Nanny's sufferings had soon ended in the manner first mentioned, but for a providential and yet only natural interference.

Redmond and Morrissy, the two associates despatched by Nale

from Hartley Court, to provide the heavy hammer for breaking open the chest, were not without their doubts of his intentions to deal fairly by them. Bill's well-known, and indeed undisguised, character warranted such suspicions; and the men came to positive conclusions when he directed them to proceed to a certain spot, by a route different from that he proposed to take himself, with the horse and cart. His pointing it out as a short cut did not allay their fears of his consummate knavery and selfishness. They communicated their ideas to each other, and resolved upon a counter-plot. Leaving him, in seeming willingness to procure the sledge, they returned quickly in his track, dogged the horse and cart stealthily during its whole journey, concealed themselves when it halted, overheard the treacherous conversation about themselves between Bill and Sam "with the stick-leg," (the only name or appellation we could discover as attaching to that very doubtful individual,) watched the subsequent proceedings of the worthies, and, the moment they were fairly out of view after interring Nanny, the men came forward, one of them at least determined to act a brave part.

Having previously arranged in their place of concealment, to go to work promptly, they scrambled in silence down the steep pit, and began to remove, without speaking a word, the bushes and sand from the lid of the chest. The poor buried alive was recalled, by the noise, to the exercise of nearly the last mental observation she remained capable of making. She lay on her knees and elbows, her mouth open, and her head moving up and down to every painful gasp of the thick air which she laboured to force through her lungs. But although the noise slightly restored her to a sense of existence, it by no means communicated a hope that existence was to be prolonged a single instant after the opening of her coffin; for Nanny believed she was still in the hands of her cruel enemy. Heavy blows succeeded to the former scraping and shuffling over her head, each skilfully directed by Dick Redmond, so as to force the lid upwards: they were successful; it half opened; there was a rush of warm vapour from within, and a rush of pure atmosphere from without, of which Nanny took a long, renovating draught; but with her rallied feeling of life came instantaneously her horror of what she had at last to encounter; and in the useless instinct of avoiding the eye of her executioner, she quickly resumed her squatted position, and drew her head as closely to her body as she could,—the head of her cloak slipping, with the long-practised jerk, over her ears,—as the tortoise, which, in her present attitude, she much resembled, will, in case of attack, draw the most exposed part of his body under his shell.

"Now for id, Daniel, my daisy," cried Dick Redmond, as in high spirits he flung wide the lid of the chest. Nanny heard him

not. He peeped in—he opened his eyes: he stared again; but could not attach any certain idea of form or of nature to the object that met his view. Daniel, who all along had been suffering under the fear of Bill Nale's future wrath on account of the course he dared to pursue in this adventure, and whose misgiving heart finally relinquished every hope of escaping detection by a man he believed well-known to the devil, if he was not the devil himself; —Daniel remained rather in the background; his tremors only relieved by a covetous anticipation of the sweet jingling sounds that he concluded were to meet his ear, and the shining and splendid treasures that he thought were to dazzle his eye.

"Is there mooch?" he timidly asked, while his companion still stared into the chest.

"Sing toi, oi, iddle-dee, toi, i, ee.
Hah, hah, hah, fol, dhe-too-rol-lee!"

answered his more vivacious comrade, singing to the chorus of a merry song, of which each verse presented some droll idea, subsequently enjoyed in the "hah, hah, hah!"

"Don't let the soighth iv id make you take lave o' your senses, Dick," resumed Daniel, now advancing.

"Well, there's no use in talkin', Bill Nale," Dick went on; "you *are* the biggest rogue that ever was hanged; if this is not makin' gandhers iv us, divil a gandher in the world, but all grey geese;" and Redmond seemed highly to enjoy the supposed jest.

"Arrah, what's come over you?" questioned the serious Daniel Morrissy.

"Musha, Daniel, my poor fellow, however the duoul he done id, Rattlin' Bill Nale dhrew every bit o' the threasure through the boards o' the chest, either while we turned off a minute or so, purtendin to go for the hommer, or at the very time we thought we were watchin' him along the road—by coorse, the bouchal had the kay unknownst to any body—an' see here—here's what he laves for yoursef and mysef—a bundle iv ould rags, not worth a Keenogue; an' all the time he an' Sam talked iv chatin' us, they knew we were widin hearin', an' the whole o' that talk was jest to make us think they left the threasure behind 'em. Well, Bill, you're a deary iv a bird."

"Bud isn't id like an ould bag o' blue cloth?" asked Daniel, at length peering in; "an' maybe the goold an' silver is inside iv id."

"By gonnies, maybe so! thry."

Daniel cautiously laid his hand on our still crouching friend; she gave a painful moan, and feebly moved her head.

"Oh-a—oh-a! what the duoul is that?" cried Daniel, jumping backward.

"What! did the bag bite you?"

"It's alive—it's himself is in id, I b'lieve," whispered the superstitious fellow.

"Who?—Nale?"

"Yes, his ownsef; it's as likely as any."

"Bother, Daniel," laughed Dick; "bud stop—supposin' it is, I'll see how he'll take a clipe o' this hommer by way o' payment for chatin' us;" and he stepped to the chest.

"I'm a poor auld lump iv a sinner, my honey pet," petitioned Nanny, with a face of the most wretched entreaty that ever sinner wore, as she was raised from her position of terror and vain concealment by the athletic arms of Dick Redmond—"I'm a poor ould lump iv a sinner, my honey pet," she repeated, still imagining she addressed another person,—"an' may the marcies meet your darlin' sowls in glory above, an' give marcy to ould Nanny this day—may loock an' grace come peltin' and powrin in your road every day you get up from your bed; may hard fort'n be broke afore you—an' may riches galore* be rainin' on you, till you won't know what to do wid id!"—

"Why, then, tundher-an'-bloody-wars!" cried Dick Redmond, utterly amazed,—nay, very nearly frightened as he looked into the agonized face he held up to his own view,—"an' is this you, ould Nanny the Knitther?"—

"Ah, then it is, God help me!" she answered, in a voice wonderfully changed and assured at the blessed conviction that she was not in the gripe of her persecutor; and now, Nanny had got on "her hunkers," and, with her hands closely clasped, waved from side to side,—"an' thanks for ever be to the holy Name, isn't id the honey darlin' Dick Redmond I'm spakin' to?"—

An explanation ensued. Dick relished the joke exceedingly.

"An' by rason you once sthrove to get me a good wife, ould Nanny—'twas no fault o' your's that she turned out conthrary—you done your best—I'll help you out o' your coff'n, afore Bill Nale comes back—there," placing her on the ground—"an' taste this, to rise your heart,"—administering some whiskey out of a small vial—"an' now, run for your life while your legs 'll last."

Nanny acted on the advice as strenuously as she was able. In pity to the old creature, Dick assisted her up to the edge of the sand-pit.

"Good bye, my honey pet, an' the Lord grant you your reward in glory for ever, amin,—an' my honey, Dick Redmond, when you come across him, there'll be no use in tellin' him what kind iv a load he had the throuble o' carryin' so far."

"Never fear, Nanny—say nothin' about us, an' we'll say no-

* In abundance.

thin' about you—it's the best play to keep sacrets on both sides—an' so, take your heels while you can."

Though much bruised and battered, as well as exhausted, the rejoicing dame literally set forward at a pace between a trot and an amble, Dick shouting after her—

"Run, your sowl, run! he's afther you! he'll have you if you don't put the stumps to the best o' their knowledge!"

But little additional exhortation was required to keep Nanny at her utmost speed in an effort to remove, as far as possible, from the scene of her direful troubles. Mumbling thanksgivings at every step, she panted and perspired along; and, at the very first opportunity, turned off the road, and made her way over intricate paths, and through the most lonesome places, towards a friend's cabin—the nearest at hand, no matter which—for where was the cabin under whose humble roof Nanny had not a friend?

The house of refuge appeared in view. She slackened her pace, drew breath, and began somewhat distinctly to cogitate. Now that her own life seemed respited at least, if not quite in her possession, thoughts of the information, as to the fate of "Lady Eleezabeth Judkin, barrowknight," gleaned from the conversation of Nale and his associate, arose in her mind, and with them a really disinterested anxiety to succour her captive patroness. "The honey Sir William, too!" must she not exert herself to save him from the terrible fate with which he was threatened?—Doubtless, the danger of "makin' or meddlin'," was great; it seemed little less than wilfully precipitating herself into some dilemma as fearful, and perhaps more fatal, than that from which she had just escaped. But suffering seemed to make Nanny's heart magnanimous. "What good was her ould end of a life," when put in competition with that of her beloved young "bennyfacther," and Sir William Judkin? God would guard her—or, if it was "the holy an' blessed Will" that she must suffer, "why, then"—and tears of sympathy with her kind, and even with her own forgotten nature, purer than for twenty years she had shed, obscured the old woman's eyes,—"why, then, Nanny's part 'll be gone through, an' that's all."

The result of her determination will be found developed in a future chapter.

CHAPTER X.

While Nanny arranges her plans, we are at liberty to visit our heroine in the house to which, as we have learned, through the Knitter's agency, from Bill Nale's conversation with his worthy confidant, Captain Talbot had caused her to be conveyed. Indeed, it seems our duty to accompany her thither; nay, recollecting the imperfect accounts of her motions supplied to Sir William Judkin, first by "the poor girl wid the good karacthers," and next by Miss Alicia Hartley, a plain detail of all her adventures, from the moment she left her father's mansion, immediately after her marriage, is called for at our hands.

Until that day, Eliza Hartley—as, notwithstanding her increased consequence in the world, we shall, with the familiarity of an old acquaintance, continue to call her—until that day, Eliza Hartley had never known real sorrow. Beloved by her father, petted by her aunt, adored by her servants, flattered by all her friends, life had been to her a time of continued sunshine, a season of laughter merely, during which she never laid her head on her pillow with a thought for the morrow, unless, indeed, it might have been an anticipation of some little pleasure, of which the enjoyment should be deferred until daylight again smiled on Hartley Court. Had Nature formed her heart of indifferent materials, an existence of such unchastened happiness,—nay, of almost unrestrained self-indulgence, might have proved dangerous to the developement of her character: haughtiness, obstinacy, and indolent pride, might have resulted from it; above all, mental strength and energy might have been frittered away amid idle pursuits, and the fuss of petty whims and impulses. But Eliza's heart was shaped in the mould of perfect feminine goodness; and great vivacity, and a gaiety that seemed like levity, but was not what it seemed, appeared the only distinct impress made upon her character by a course of life under which other women would have become unamiable. True, her gaiety often provoked more severe criticism from unfriendly or envious tongues; and we, her best friends, must admit that, hitherto, it had occasionally caused her to act without thought, or obeying the impulse of a moment, to fling aside something she really prized for a chace after something that could but momentarily fill her fancy, and was not calculated, upon reflection, to content her nature. Still we cannot bring ourselves to be very harsh on her only fault; for if she was

gay because fortune treated her too indulgently, she was so too, because she was innocent—innocent in mind, in feeling, in the unconsciousness of a single thought that could make her otherwise; and,

——"The innocent are gay."

Upon the morning, therefore, when Eliza changed her name, and with it saw herself driven from the sunny paths over which she had previously tripped in a round of unbroken enjoyment, adversity did not find in the spoiled child of fortune a weak girl who could do nothing but tremble or rail at the vicissitude. On the contrary, there suddenly appeared in Eliza a courage and promptitude fitted for the occasion, of which the principles, eternal within her breast, had hitherto slumbered, only because they had never needed to show themselves. In one hour she passed out of the playfulness almost of childhood into the steady energy of a woman, who, for the sake of those that loved her, and that she loved in return, was prepared to dare much without fear, and to suffer all without repining.

Having dried her vain tears, and put off her, as vain, bridal garments, the first impression of her now thoughtful mind convinced her that the preliminary step to any effort she might be called on to make, ought to consist in seeking a conference with her father and her husband. With a deep composure, which surprised all around her, she bade adieu to her bridesmaids, ordered her carriage to the door, and preceded by her aunt, who involuntarily acknowledging her right to act, and her power to protect, petitioned not to be left behind, Eliza slowly ascended the step, and desired to be driven to the castle of Enniscorthy.

It did not occur to her that she might be refused admittance. Hitherto, wherever she had gone, Eliza had found officious eagerness smoothing the way before her. The carriage stopped before the entrance-gate of the temporary prison, she dismounted, and requesting her aunt to wait for her return, drew her veil over her face, in order to disguise it from the bold stare of a group of yeomen assembled near at hand. Not thinking it necessary to ask permission to pass, she was entering the gate, when the rude and ill-clad sentinel, lowering his rusty musket and bayonet, abruptly demanded, "Who are you, an' where are you dhrivin?"

She stepped back, shocked at the interruption. It was the first rudeness that had ever been offered to her. But the quickly curbed tears which started to her eyes did not spring from mortified vanity; their source lay higher, in the apprehension, that from those whom she came to serve, and whom she felt she could serve, her presence was interdicted.

Regaining her carriage, and taking a moment to think, Eliza spoke from the window, desiring that some officer who had autho-

rity to admit her might be sent out. The sentinel took no notice whatever of her request, or rather command, and the unoccupied band of yeomen only stared more boldly than before, some of them leering and winking on each other. With mock respect in his tone and manner, one of them at length answered that her ladyship's orders should be obeyed: in consequence of his delivery of the message inside, an officer advanced, however, to the carriage, and Eliza shrank back in horror and despair, when in that officer she recognised Talbot. His step was not firm, his lips were white, his eyes quailed even beneath her veiled glance, with, as Eliza believed, the cowardice of conscious guilt.

"I have the honour to await your commands, Madam," he said, after standing some time unnoticed by her at the door of the carriage.

"I understand, Sir," she forced herself to reply, "that I must demand permission from some one in authority to go in to see my father and my husband."

"It is indeed necessary that you should do so, Madam," he answered, in a calmer voice than that in which he had at first spoken; as if the hauteur of her address had brought back the unwincing sternness of his nature.

"Then, Sir, please to order yonder saucy fellow to let me pass."

"I regret, Madam, that your wish cannot be complied with."

"What, Sir!"—and she started up from her leaning position in undisguised terror,—"are Sir Thomas Hartley and Sir William Judkin to be shut up from the visits of the daughter and the wife?"

"Yes, Madam; such must be the case."

"Impossible, Sir!—send your commanding-officer hither."

"Excuse me, Madam,—but, in this instance, there is no one to contravene my orders."

"Your orders, Sir!—and these inhuman orders emanate from you!"

"They are my orders, Madam."

"God help me, then!—and God help the poor prisoners left at your mercy!"—She again sank back in an agony of despair, and, covering her face with her hands, deep and long moans escaped her.

Captain Talbot seemed suddenly touched;—he trembled;—he approached closer to the window, and, in a faltering voice, too low to be heard by Miss Alice, said—

"Oh! why have you not come alone?—why, this moment, can we not speak fully together?—Eliza! beloved Eliza!"

She interrupted him;—starting as if an adder had whispered at her ear, and flung back her veil, that, with an eye authoritative and stern, and now not moist with a single tear, she might regard him.

"Wretch!—wretch, as well as villain, leave my sight!"

He stood irresolutely. She peremptorily waved her hand, repeating—"Begone—begone!" He was about to obey, apparently shrinking from her presence.

"Stop, Captain Talbot!" cried the weeping Miss Alice. Eliza again hid her face, but she did not interrupt her aunt. Although, in her present mood, she could not bend her own outraged spirit to sue to Talbot, the object to be prayed for was worth some humiliation.

"Oh! Captain Talbot," petitioned the sobbing old lady, clasping her hands together, "surely you will not be so cruel as to refuse us this favour? I know, I know you will not—you will have pity on us—us, two ladies whom you often sat with at the fireside, and who are as unused to beg any favour, as they are unable to bear the great misery that now visits them. Oh! take our thanks, our hearts' thanks, and admit us to comfort the poor prisoners!"

Eliza slowly let her hands fall, and gazed upon her former lover, to note the effect of this appeal in his features. But his brow only seemed knit into its purpose; all his former apparent vacillation was gone, and he carelessly, but steadily replied—

"Madam, I can only repeat the regret I feel, that duty obliges me to—"

"Drive to the inn!" cried Eliza, again interrupting him. As the carriage turned away, he bowed profoundly, and quickly re-entered the gate.

For a time, Eliza's pride, energy, hope, and resolution, quite failed her, and, on the way to the inn, she indulged, along with her aunt, in a shower of bitter tears. Agony and despair rent her bosom. She had felt, and she continued to feel within her, a resolution to brave any danger in the performance of whatever effort her husband and her father might suggest as necessary to their safety; but that, by this refusal to admit her to their presence, she could not direct her zeal, her devotion, and her firmness, upon any course of which they might approve, or which might be beneficial, was an overwhelming thought. And her feelings gained their height, when she farther reflected on the nature of the charge under which her father and her husband had been imprisoned;—on the fate that awaited them if that charge could be established; or, amid the blind fury of the time, even made to look plausible; on the promptitude with which punishment would follow conviction; and, above all, on the ominous success which had so far attended their enemy's measures, and which, calculating by the power he seemed to wield, and the savage determination he still evinced, appeared but a presage of his complete triumph, and of Eliza's utter misery.

Gaining the inn, while filled with these thoughts, it was only

natural that, strong in previous energy and resolution, as we have described her to have been, Eliza should sink, momentarily overpowered, by the woman's fears and pangs for those she loved, and by profound despair on her own account.

Miss Alicia, although in the first instance helplessly overpowered, wanted, luckily for herself, the ardency of feeling that makes a wreck of the youthful bosom; for, with the decay of physical capacity to struggle, Nature deadens the susceptibilities of age. Keeping up, therefore, only her strain of impotent lamentation, she could now administer some necessary comfort to her almost insensible niece; and in this view she rang the bell, when the girl "wid the good karacthers" answered it.

About twilight, having often and vainly sent in the meantime to gather intelligence of the proceedings at the castle, Eliza was roused from her despondency, by the intelligence that a person wished to speak with her on important business. The only important business concerning which, in her mind, any one could desire an interview, must refer to the situation of her father and her husband; and she accordingly desired the visitor to be admitted.

A woman of tall stature, muffled and hooded in the common Irish mantle, but not more carefully or remarkably than it is often worn, entered the chamber, and stopping almost at the threshold, addressed our heroine in a low, controlled voice.

"You are the daughter of Sir Thomas Hartley?"

"I am." Eliza could utter no more, for the solemnity of the stranger, in deportment as well as in accent, although her face did not become discernible, conveyed anticipations of sad tidings to be spoken.

"I would converse with you, Madam," continued the woman impressively.

"Begin then."

"Alone."

"This lady is my aunt," said Eliza.

"It matters not; no third person must share our interview, and the business I come to communicate requires immediate attention, Madam."

"Indeed, my good woman," pleaded Miss Alicia, "if you come to say any thing concerning the dear prisoners at the castle, it will be cruelty to exclude me from the conversation."

"You judge correctly, Madam; my communication relates to them, but only to Miss Hartley can it be made; you may hear it from her, not from me: such are my directions, and I cannot and will not permit an exception."

"Are you aware that I am Sir Thomas Hartley's sister?"

"Yes, Madam, but that is nothing to the purpose. I perceive

your niece grows uneasy at our delay,—please to leave us together."

"Do so, dearest aunt, for indeed I am on the rack to learn what this woman has to say to me."

"You will not exclude me long?" again petitioned Miss Alicia.

"Only so long as is absolutely necessary for the punctual delivery of my commission, Madam; I am as anxious as you can be to have the matter over, for pressing affairs call me to another place."

Miss Alicia retired, but only to the next apartment; and there, strong were her yearnings to listen at the door to the discourse in which she had been denied a share; but her high and pure sense of honour struggled with her feminine, and, under her circumstances, almost allowable curiosity, and finally she rejected the temptation.

It would have done her no good had she yielded, however; for, the moment she passed out of the chamber, the woman latched and bolted the door, and, stepping somewhat nearer to Eliza, held out a letter in her hand, as she said—

"This, Madam, is for you, and from your father."

"From my father!" cried Eliza, snatching it, her whole attention diverted from the person of the bearer.

"Even so, Madam. It may seem strange in your eyes that a person of my appearance should be employed to hand you so important a document—one, indeed, upon the safe conveyance of which you will learn much depends; but, in the present times, the person least likely to be suspected was the most proper to be chosen, and I am therefore its bearer. Read it, Madam, and read it quickly; turn round to the window; and there is yet daylight enough for the perusal—time will be lost by calling for candles."

Eliza quickly adopted the hint, and with all the eagerness of hope and fear ran over the contents of the epistle, which were as follows:—

"MY DEAREST CHILD,

"I find that a deeply laid plan has for some time been preparing, chiefly by one desperate individual, to get up some plausible evidence of a connexion between me and the insurgents, in order that I may be dealt with as a traitor to the State; and I fear, too, my dearest Eliza, that from the short time allowed me for my defence, as well as from the fact that I have to encounter private malignity at the hands of every one around me, it will be impossible to establish my innocence of the unfounded charge.

"But check your rising terrors. I would not so abruptly communicate this intelligence, did I think that the results were to be fatal to me. Let me assure you, that except a temporary shade upon my character, and a short separation from you, I have really

nothing to fear. My arbitrary judges may indeed declare me guilty, and more, may sentence me to death, but their sentence will not be executed upon your father. I am positively certain of escaping it. From them, indeed, or from one of their party, I expect no mercy; but Almighty Providence, the friend of the innocent, has raised up a champion for us in our great trouble, Eliza. We are to be saved—you as well as I—(and you from worse than the fate to which I am nominally doomed,) by a person, the last upon earth we could have calculated on for such a service. I cannot venture to insert his name; for if I did, and if my note miscarried, his destruction as well as mine were inevitable. Enough, that I fully and tranquilly depend not only upon his friendship, but upon the plans he has formed for my safety. This night I shall be freed from prison, and before the morning dawns shall be in a place of concealment beyond the reach of my enemies, where I am to remain only while our friend causes powerful application to be made to Government for a reversal of my sentence; then, my character justified, and my person safe, I can resume my station in society.

"Now, attend, Eliza. All this is not only possible, but certain, provided you unhesitatingly adopt a specific advice, which I am about to offer you:—decline that advice, or even dally with it, and our ruin is not less certain. But, first, a few words of explanation.

"I have said that you also were threatened with a terrible fate —one more terrible than that prepared for me. This is but too true. It has been attempted to seduce you——I will not—cannot write any more positive allusion to the diabolical matter; and even prudence again reminds me that, for a reason before given, I had better not to do so. But credit the solemn words of your father, uttered on no light grounds. Destruction surrounds you in your present unprotected situation;—avoid it—fly from it, instantly and without hesitation—that is the advice I said I would give. Prepare to escape privately from Enniscorthy, this very night, to an asylum which is ready to receive you. And now let me add why your father's safety depends on the decision you make. If you hesitate to obey me, I must, after my escape from prison, remain, at all hazards, to watch over you, and, as long as I may be allowed to discharge the duty, shield you from the demon who would destroy my precious Eliza; this will almost certainly cause my re-apprehension, and then indeed hope were gone for ever. Obey me, therefore, for both our sakes; I use the strongest terms of command, because none others will convey my urgency; nor do I yet deem, Eliza, that I have forfeited over my child the authority of a parent.

"Prepare yourself, I can only repeat, and freely trust yourself into the hands of those whom I shall send to guide your flight. After

you leave Enniscorthy some distance behind, I will myself meet and accompany you to your journey's end, disguised however from the view of a strange man who is to lead us by lonesome ways with which I am unacquainted, and to whom, as he does not share my confidence, it might be fatal to give the slightest suspicion of my identity. Farther, prudence, and the important results which are at stake, will oblige us to interchange few words on the road, and those in whispers;—nay, I must even try to assume a feigned voice, lest the man may be acquainted with my usual accents. In the minutest particular, caution is indispensable—for, recollect how much depends upon perhaps our least action! Your happiness—honour—life—the life of your father, and (I should have considered it before my own) that of the noble-hearted friend who dares all to succour and save us!

"I must not conclude without another injunction. This communication is to be kept strictly secret from your poor aunt; nor must she know of your arrangements for leaving Enniscorthy, nor that you are to leave it. She might fall into the hands of your enemy, and, in her present distressed and enfeebled state, drop some one word that were sufficient to re-transfer us all to the fate we try to avoid; and besides, she could not endure the fatigue for which you are better able to nerve yourself. Farewell, my dearest Eliza!—The bearer is fully in my confidence,—Farewell!—May the Almighty Father protect the dear child of the fond and anxious

T. H."

Shivering terror, astonishment, joy, hope, doubt—every variety of feeling, appeared by turns on Eliza's brow, as she perused this epistle. She laid it on the old-fashioned seat of the window; she put her hands upon her eyes—the woman saw her start expressively: again she examined the writing; it surely was her father's hand—less distinct and elegant, indeed, than that to which she had been accustomed; but hurry and agitation might account for the difference. She hastily read the letter a second time, and doubted more strongly than before: she could not tell why, but, to her mind, a certain unauthentic strain ran through it; and Eliza felt inclined to refuse assent, or even consideration, to the extraordinary propositions it contained.

But chilly alarm possessed her at the reflection that still it might have been written by her father; and if so—and if she hesitated to obey its commands!—Eliza sank overpowered at the thought. A third time she took it up. Now she had little or no doubt of the hand, and the diction and style seemed less strange. She looked towards the bearer of the important writing. The woman had resumed her station at the door, and Eliza could see nothing of her person and features, enveloped as both still were in

her ample cloak, and farther obscured by the deepening twilight. It occurred to her to ask her visiter to put down the hood of the mantle, but good feeling checked the impulse; and indeed good sense too; for, if the letter were genuine, its bearer must be trustworthy, inasmuch as the writer had said she fully possessed his confidence.

After a moment of useless observation, Eliza breathed out—"Am I to receive no instructions beyond what this letter conveys?"

"Any circumstances with which I am acquainted, and not interdicted from mentioning, you may know, Madam."

"Have you no other note?—from no other person?"

"I have, indeed, been charged with another note, Madam;—strange that I should forget an important part of my commission!" and pacing forward, she put a folded scrap of paper into Eliza's hand, hastily written over with a pencil, and containing these lines:—

"MY DEAREST LOVE,

"Fear nothing on my account: the only cause for my arrest is the pretext to separate us; but I cannot be detained from you longer than to-night. My only apprehensions are, that in the mean time you may be exposed to the machinations of a villain. Keep yourself concealed from his view—fly from him—escape him, by every means, until you are protected by,

"Your adoring husband,
WILLIAM JUDKIN."

Of the genuineness of this note, Eliza had not a doubt; and her heart grew tranquil, almost joyful, with hope. She laid the scrap of paper upon the more lengthened epistle, which it seemed fully to authenticate, and looked round for writing materials.

"There is one matter, Madam, which Sir William may not have mentioned."

"Pray, pray state it!"

"This night he also regains his liberty."

"May I not ask who is the blessed agent of his and my happiness?"

"I can only tell you, Madam, that he shall be freed from Enniscorthy castle by the same hand that helps to open the door of your father's dungeon."

"Then, perhaps, I may meet with him, along with my father?"

"No; that is improbable—impossible! He cannot escape for an hour after Sir Thomas Hartley; and yet"—the speaker paused, and her voice momentarily took a cadence that started Eliza—"and yet, you *may* see him to-night!"

"To whom do I speak?" Eliza half arose in anxious misgiving.

"To one who will befriend you and yours, young lady," and Eliza's romantic surmise proved faulty.

"'Tis time I were back to your friends, Madam: have you resolved upon your answer to Sir Thomas Hartley?"

"I have—I will implicitly obey my dear father. You shall convey to him my written answer to that effect."

"Is not your verbal answer sufficient, Madam? He has informed you that he confides in me;—I may, therefore, be trusted with it: and, in a case where the utmost precaution is necessary, the less writing the better. I do not fear that I shall be suspected during my visits backward and forward from your father to you; but the chance is possible, and, therefore, by all means to be avoided, when a single line under your hand might destroy all our arrangements."

"You are right," answered Eliza, gaining still more confidence from the seeming carefulness and earnestness of the negotiator.

"You are right, good woman: remember, then, the very words I say. But, first, can you tell me the names of certain persons alluded to in my father's letter?"

"I can, Madam; but, for the present, I am not permitted to do so."

"Then take my message.—I am well, rejoiced at my father's prospect of safety, and I will implicitly obey him."

"Depend on my delivering it, word for word, Madam.—One other observation is necessary; Sir Thomas Hartley has not, I believe, mentioned the hour at which you are to hear from him again?"

"No! or it could not have escaped me."

"At ten o'clock, then, Madam, you will be prepared for your departure from Enniscorthy. Attire yourself for a journey on horseback. Be prudent and firm, and keep your own counsel, and all will go well. For the purpose of baffling your aunt's curiosity, you had better invent some probable story."

"What? woman!" interrupted Eliza, "counsel me to utter an untruth! My father never instructed you to do so; nor would he give his confidence to one whose nature and habits permit such advice. Ah! your letters may be forgeries! There are such things, as well executed."

"Then you waver in your resolution?"

"I—I know not what to do."

"Your message shall be faithfully delivered, young lady;—at ten, be ready to steal from this house with me, or—be accessary to your father's death!" The abrupt stranger was about to leave the room.

"Stay!" cried Eliza—"you will also see the writer of the pencilled note?"

"Yes, Madam."

"To-night?"

"I hope so."

"And can also deliver a message to him from me?"

"To him,—from you?"

"Yes, from me to my beloved husband."

The woman's last answers had been given very calmly, though expressively; but now it was in a rude, if not fierce tone that she quickly answered—"No! not a breath!"—and so saying, she left Eliza alone.

CHAPTER XI.

Her aunt did not give Eliza much time for solitary reflection: and her question of—"Well, dear child, what—what have been the tidings?" proposed a difficulty. During our heroine's whole life, she had never spoken an equivocation; and little praise is claimed for her on that account, for she had never had any thing to conceal from the indulgent and virtuous friends about her;—the fact is mentioned merely to show, that by habit as well, we hope, as by nature, she must now have utterly rejected the notion of deceiving her aunt with the "some probable story," just recommended to her adoption. Nor could she be silent; and how, then, answer?—"Plainly," concluded Eliza; and referring to her father's letter, or to the letter that purported to come from her father, she read out that single injunction, which commanded her not to communicate to Miss Alice the intelligence it contained.

The old lady was of course much surprised, and startled, and grieved, and afraid. "What could be her brother's motive for refusing his confidence, in misfortune, to one from whom, in days of happiness, he had never withheld it?—her dear child would at least explain that."

No—because by so doing she must absolutely reveal the nature of the secret deposited exclusively in her breast.—"Very extraordinary still; unkind, cruel of Sir Thomas. Well,—but what, generally speaking, were the situation and the hopes of the poor

prisoners?"—Their situation not dangerous, and their hopes lively. —"Praised be the Lord;—oh, for ever praised:" and the good lady knelt down, in the sincere fervency of her heart;—"and Sir Thomas's letter answered for the dear Sir William as well as for himself?"—Not so—but another letter did; and Eliza handed the pencilled note to Miss Alicia.

This partial confidence, slight as it really was, operated upon the querulous old lady as does, upon a fretful child, the permission to catch up some plaything of little moment, instead of the valuable article for which he had at first raised his tiny cries. While dwelling, word after word, upon Sir William's scrawl, Miss Alice forgot how ill she had been treated by the withholding the more important document from her scrutiny. Her heart swelled with pity, admiration, and love of the writer. "The considerate, the fond, the gallant Sir William! how her soul thanked him for the comfort of that little note? But—Heaven, in its mercies, protect us!—could it, and Sir Thomas's letter too, have been written only to give assurance to Eliza and herself!—could the dear prisoners, in compassion for them, agree to communicate hopes that had no real foundation?"—Eliza, at much length, combated the unreasonbleness, as well as the refined misery-seeking of this conjecture. "Well; thank God, her darling child thought so; 'twas a great blessing that such was her opinion: but, again—and she prayed a good Providence to prove her fears vain—might not Sir Thomas's letter be a forgery? Nay, even this note."—She drew near to the lights, and, adjusting her spectacles, re-examined the pencilled lines—"they were just like Sir William's hand, and no more—just as like as a skilful knave could easily make them;—blessed Goodness! was her dear child quite, quite sure of the handwriting of the letter?"

This surmise and question proved more distressing to Eliza than any of the preceding ones had done; yet she answered, that, indeed, she had very carefully scrutinized the letter, and her conviction was that it must be genuine. As to Sir William's note, she entertained not the slightest doubt of it; his hand was a very peculiar one, and could not possibly be imitated, so as to deceive her at least; and, in fact, her dear aunt unnecessarily afflicted herself by such surmises;—"and now, dearest Madam," continued Eliza, "I will retire for a little while to reflect and to pray; for I need the most cool exercise of my mind, and the most merciful help Heaven may be pleased to vouchsafe me:" and accordingly she left the chamber, and in solitude endeavoured to form, positively, her determination.

"The one desperate individual" who had plotted against her father's life, could be no other than the "enemy" who had also sought her destruction—who, in fact, in order to get her into his power, had diabolically contrived the arrest of Sir Thomas and of

her husband—"but," said Eliza, detecting herself arguing in a circle, "if I take any assertion from that letter, so as to reason on it, I must first suppose the epistle genuine, and then my dilemma would end at once: and, hold—do I not here see started the strongest possible reason to believe it written by my father? If a forgery, it can have been forged only by that "one desperate individual," that detestable "enemy," and would he thus describe himself!"

She started up, delighted at the thought. Joined to its other internal evidence, there could no longer be a doubt of the authenticity of the letter. She would, without farther hesitation,—nay, in hope and joy of heart, act upon it.

"And yet," still whispered her womanly prudence and fears—"a consummate villain would hit even upon that finesse, in order to make it look more like the truth—in order to secure his one long-sought object, for which he has already bid adieu to character in every shape, in order"—and she dropped trembling into her chair—"in order to beguile a wretched woman, far from her protectors, and from all human help!"

For some time Eliza could but shudder and shrink at the bare idea of committing herself to the guidance of the questionable person who had delivered the letter, and hasten, at an advanced hour of the night, most probably, into the very arms of destruction.

"But here is the awful question," she continued, laying down the document after she had again pored over it—"the probabilities, whether it be genuine or not, are pretty nearly equal: the life of my father *may*, then, be in my hands; and should I hesitate? If, through my selfish fears, the beloved author of my existence were again to fall into his enemies' grasp, could peace of mind ever visit me? Must I not regard myself as that coward daughter who feared to risk a chance of personal injury for the equal chance of saving her father? Oh, God!" she cried, falling on her knees, and stretching her arms towards Heaven, while the ennobling nature of the struggle, and the deep-felt reliance upon Him whom she supplicated, gave a holy expression to her beautiful features —"Father of All, guide my feeble reason, enlighten my imperfect nature, raise my selfish heart, that, in this first necessity for a proper exercise of my judgment, I may decide as thou wouldst have me do!"

Covering her face with her hands, she bent humbly before the Great Power she invoked, and for some time remained silently in that position. When she arose and seated herself, her countenance, though pale, was calm and firm; and not without a mild glow of joyfulness, she felt as if the Mighty Intelligence, of which her soul was an emanation, had been present to it, and imparted the power to decide: and as persons will do in solitude, who have come to a fixed resolution, after a strong mental combat, Eliza

breathed out her purpose aloud. "The risk shall be run. His arm will shield, even amid danger, the child who would save her father. In the name of God, let me prepare for my journey! It cannot lead me into harm. And now I do not fear my enemy. There is a strength given to me beyond his strength. Either we are not to meet at all, or I shall overcome him if we do."

Wearing a brow of steady resolve, she joined her aunt, and spent nearly the two succeeding hours in endeavouring to inspire the feeble old lady with hope and confidence. Meantime, to say that, even after all her high-minded determination, her own bosom remained unagitated by relapsing doubts and fears, would be to exaggerate Eliza into a commonplace heroine indeed.

About half-past nine o'clock, an account of the result of her father's trial was brought to her by a messenger sent from the inn. Sentence of death had been recorded against him. Hesitation once more passed away. She would dare every thing for the merest chance of warding off the execution of that sentence.

Of the going or coming of the particular person who conveyed these tidings, Miss Alicia had been unaware: Eliza privately employed him, and as privately met him upon his return from the castle; so that her aunt could ask no questions concerning whatever intelligence he might communicate. To other individuals despatched with the knowledge of the old lady, her niece now sent orders not to approach the inn. And as she sat at the side of the bed where poor Miss Alice at length lay powerless, her feeble eyes closing in slumber which she vainly resisted, and presently opening to inquire if the messenger had returned, Eliza was thus enabled to withhold information that, while she cherished a hope it might prove harmless, she feared could not at present be given to her aunt, without endangering her life.

Eliza stealthily looked at her watch. It wanted but a few minutes to ten. Finding her heart sinking, she once more knelt, and once more gained resolution. Still on her knees, she softly took her aunt's languid hand, and kissed it; and then arose, and cautiously bent over the bed to regard the long-loved features which she might never again behold. Miss Alicia slumbered, but as Eliza a second time impulsively caught up her hand, awoke, and their eyes met.

"I hope you feel sufficiently warm, my dearest aunt," she said, in a choking voice, while she ardently pressed the hand she held. Miss Alicia's reply was scarcely audible, yet it spoke gratitude and assurance, and her weak fingers feebly returned the pressure of which they were just sensible. Her eyes closed again. Eliza stole out of the chamber, gained her own, and hastily proceeded to array herself for her perilous journey.

A riding-habit formed no part of the attire she had brought with her from Hartley Court; but she could clothe herself warmly, and

not very inconveniently. As the last article of dress was arranged, the clock on the lobby began to strike ten. Again she looked at her watch; it also indicated the momentous hour. Instinctively she pressed her right-hand to her heart, while yet the strokes rung on, and turning round faced the closed door of her chamber. The tenth stroke had scarcely been told, when it was followed by a single heavy knock at the outside of the door. She started, catched her breath shortly; but, after a pause, desired the challenger to come in.

"'Tis I; come you out to me," answered the low voice of her former visiter.

At once closing with her purpose, boldly and courageously, Eliza opened the door, and saw the woman standing in the gloom at the head of the stair. Eliza held a light in her hand.

"Leave the candle in the room; it may draw observation; and then come closer here, while we exchange a word."

Eliza passively obeyed these directions.

"By your preparations for the road, I see you have not altered your mind," continued the woman, when they stood together at the stair-head in the dark.

"I have not," replied Eliza, firmly—lead on, I follow you; if I am betrayed, Heaven will punish my betrayers."

A slight scoffing sound, made by the breath, escaped the woman before she continued;—"You have nothing to fear; act resolutely, and you will bless the night I led you from this roof. I even bring you assurances of my honesty. What words are these?—'God bless you! my love, and may you live to bless the husband of your choice longer than did your sainted mother.'"

Eliza indeed recollected them, as words addressed to her that very morning by her father, while she hung upon his neck after the marriage ceremony.

"And you ought to know this ring," resumed the woman, giving one;—"step into your chamber, and look at it."

Eliza did so, and at once recognised it as her father's.

"Nay, I forgot," said the woman's voice at the door, as she flung a note across the narrow room, over Eliza's shoulder, so that it rested upon the table—"read that, and then delay no longer."

Eliza tore it open, and read—

"MY BELOVED CHILD,

"I am free;—I wait to see you under a safe roof;—then I must hasten to my own concealment—only for a few days, however. Follow the bearer, a tall woman in a dark-gray cloak; she will guide you to

"Your happy, but anxious father,
T. H."

"I follow you," whispered Eliza earnestly to the guide, after having again joined her in the shadow of the lobby.

The woman, making a sign to be cautious, looked down the stair, and listened; then, giving another sign, she descended. Eliza softly trod in her steps, and, without being observed by any one belonging to the house, found herself in the streets of Enniscorthy.

The guide rapidly paced through the town, our heroine still following. Bands of yeomen, showing rather alarmed anticipation than formidable preparation, patrolled the streets, in expectancy of the attack we have already noticed. As yet, only imperfectly acquainted with the theory of warlike defence, their sense of the coming danger was chiefly manifested when they stopped to listen to an unusual noise, or cried out to the inmates of the houses to extinguish their lights, or issued their mandates, that all persons not authorized to bear arms, and wearing the very suspicious garb of civil attire, should remain within-doors; or gave whatever other orders they vaguely, and often erroneously, supposed might conduce to success in combat. And upon one or two occasions, Eliza's conductress showed great presence of mind, in so guiding her charge as to avoid sometimes detention, and sometimes questioning, by these anxious and zealous patroles.

They safely passed the lower part of the town, and glided through the thatched suburb, where all was still, and every one had seemingly retired to repose, although within every darkened hovel many an ear listened earnestly for the expected sounds of rush and tumult. At the very last cabin of the outlet, the woman halted, and tapped at its door. The latch was upraised, and a man appeared.

"Bring out the horses," said the guide.

"Where is my father?" asked Eliza.

"Hush!" was her companion's sole reply.

"He engaged to meet me, and he is not here," urged the anxious daughter.

"Be cautious of your words, Madam; none must hear you name his name; fearful danger would attend it."

The man brought out two horses.

"You will mount one of them, Madam," continued the woman. Eliza hesitated. "You will mount, or your father returns to Enniscorthy, and is lost," she continued.

"I have ventured thus far, and I will brave the result, in Heaven's name," thought Eliza, and she gained her saddle. Her companion was quickly seated in the other.

"Still follow me, and fear not," she whispered, and put her animal to a brisk pace.

Eliza was a good horsewoman; but she found herself equalled,

if not excelled, by her guide. Their rapid journey continued in silence; and it might be after about a quarter of an hour's riding, during which Eliza perceived that their course first lay northward from Enniscorthy, and then wheeled a short distance to its south-east, that, just on the ascent of a little one-arched bridge, they suddenly halted. The banks of the considerable brook it spanned were thickly wooded, forming a gloomy ravine, in which the dark summer's night grew darker, and which afforded a fit place of concealment to any one careful of avoiding observation.

"Advance!" said Eliza's companion, still speaking in a controlled voice, although she turned it towards the dusky dell.

The noise of horses' feet was heard within the gloom; two mounted men emerged from it, and were shortly on the road. As they approached, the woman addressed Eliza in a whisper.

"I now leave you, Madam, under your father's protection. Be not doubtful, even though a daughter's eye can scarce recognise him in his disguise. In the short time afforded for all our arrangements, it was impossible to find at hand a guide for your and his farther journey, who might be intrusted, beyond the slightest doubt of possible treachery, with the knowledge of your father's person; his present companion does not therefore know him; and beware how you betray the secret to the man's observation. Some whispers may be exchanged; but every thing like conversation must be avoided. Farewell, Madam! I return, in speed, to liberate Sir William Judkin. You and I shall meet again:" and turning her horse's head, she rode back towards Enniscorthy.

In the person who now drew up beside Eliza, yet at some distance from her, she endeavoured to recognise her father. Although some doubts did spring up in her heart, she believed it was indeed he. He wore the great outside coat of a peasant, of which the stiff, standing-collar closed before his face, while a broad-brimmed hat flapped down into his eyes. But, after silently regarding him through the darkness of the night, Eliza was almost sure she caught the peculiar mien of her beloved parent; and it could not be a vulgar hand which managed the spirited horse he bestrode.

While yet she looked, he spoke in a whisper. "My beloved child has acted like herself. None but my own noble Eliza could have thus proved her own character; but I reckoned on it, when I addressed her; and by courageously exercising it, she has saved us both."

"Why, then, tunder-an'-turf," interrupted the guide, rudely pushing forward; and his manner proclaimed a low-bred, and not a gentle peasant. "Misther, whatever it's plaisin to you to call yoursef, if you're goin' to go, don't stop spakin down in your throath there, becase you have a wheezin' all the night long."

"You see we must be cautious," again whispered the object of

this remonstrance. "I am not skilful at a feint; and though I strove to adopt a natural tone while disguising my real one, this man at once discovers it to be an affectation."

Eliza had certainly listened in vain to catch some cadence of her father's voice; now, however, she thought she should know one or two accents of this second whisper.

"My dear father," she replied, as softly as the softest voice could breathe the words, when the man had re-assumed his place in front, "I would not deserve the name of daughter had I disobeyed your command; and I implored the council of my God, and, I think, acted under the dictates He vouchsafed to whisper to my heart."

The rude guide again became impatient, and Eliza was now addressed, not in a cautious tone, by a voice which was quite strange to her; "Well, let us proceed as fast as our horses can travel; we have no time to lose."

"Faith! an' you may say that, Misther-wid-the-tongue-in-the wizen, if you don't want to wait for the daylight to kitch us: a thing, I've a notion, you'd rather let alone."

"On, then, Sir!" and the party set forward. Eliza's companion rode within a cautious distance of her bridle; his attentions, as far as it seemed prudent to bestow them, evincing all the kindness and watchfulness of sincere affection. The rapid rate at which they held on, would of itself have prevented continued discourse, and only a few whispers still were interchanged between them; or, if they began a dialogue, the guide surely slacked his pace, whatever might be his motive, evidently that he might over-hear it; perhaps he was merely curious to ascertain the identity of his fellow-travellers; and, upon the appearance of any such attempt, increased caution became necessary. Eliza's companion also seemed of himself inclined to fits of reflection, and half-checked sighs often escaped him.

On one occasion, while thus apparently abstracted, and while the guide seemed less inquisitive than usual, Eliza addressed him, "You appear depressed, my dear Sir."

"Eliza, when removed from you, even though for a short time, I must tremble with anxiety and apprehension."

"May I not know the exact nature of the danger to which you will still believe me exposed, Sir? If once aware of it, I could better nerve myself against it."

"You will, alas! know it too soon. At present—see—it is impossible."

The man turned round to say, that as the road grew better, they must still increase their speed. When the next respite occurred, Eliza gently whispered, "I am naturally anxious about my husband, Sir."

Her companion started.

"Your husband!—hah!—Certainly, certainly, you must be, Eliza;" and he was silent.

"My words seem to have startled you, Sir?"

"Startled me? no, child: why should they? why should you not be anxious?"

"I have heard that this night he too should escape from prison."

"And you have heard truly."

"And that it was probable I should see him immediately after."

"See him! to-night! no, no, no;—but, pardon me, Eliza, I cannot answer without agitation—dreadful agitation: it may be a long time before you see him."

"And why so, my dear Sir? you alarm me."

"Your question involves the former explanation which you required of me, and therefore cannot at present be answered—judge for yourself—this fellow again interrupts us."

"Heaven protect us all! for I see we are all yet surrounded by some frightful danger," said Eliza, and they pushed on in silence.

This was the longest discourse that occurred during a rapid journey of about fourteen Irish miles. Most frequently they struck from the high-road into narrow ways, and often swept over fields through which no beaten track marked the route. It is not in this place necessary to present the features of the country, now under the shadow of night; enough to observe, that the travellers hurried through scenery of the same general character with that which has elsewhere been given as common to the County of Wexford; up and down many ascents and descents, and within view, though indistinctly seen, of many eminences, bare or wooded; and sometimes through tracts nearly barren: for, even so late as about thirty years ago, no part of Ireland had arrived at the degree of cultivation it now can boast.

With tolerable accuracy, it has been ascertained, that nearly at the hour when Sir William Judkin set off from Hartley Court, in a vain search after his bride to the town of Enniscorthy, that young and lovely bride was much fatigued with her long and rapid ride, ascending a winding avenue which led to a respectable looking mansion seated on a green ascent. And as she turned her head over her shoulder, Eliza saw to her left hand an expanse of water, dimly shown by the reflection of the sky over its bosom, which could not be called lightsome, but rather just a shade less dark than the hills and plains it overhung; and covering another green eminence, opposite to that on which the house was situated, and ascending from the edge of the water, appeared, vague and shapeless, a massive pile of ruined building.

"Where are we, Sir?" she asked.

"Yonder, my dear child, is your house of refuge: to your left are the ruins of Dunbrody Abbey, which the morning light will present to you as a noble object in the landscape. I will but see

you to the threshold of your asylum, Eliza; and then, while the darkness yet favours my escape to my own place of concealment, we must bid each other adieu."

"And whither do you go, Sir?"

"I must be seen only by one confidential person," answered her companion, as if evading her last whispered question, or perhaps he had not heard it,—"to no other will I intrust my life: and, believe me, Eliza, my great anxiety to preserve that life is with a view of making it useful to you; for it may still happen that you will require my guidance and guardianship."

"Your words again alarm me, Sir.—Oh, speak, Sir! my husband!"

The guide had knocked loudly at the door of the house, to which they were now very near; it opened, lights appeared from it, and the man, turning in his saddle, seemed closely watching them.

"We must part, Eliza; I leave you in safety—it depends on yourself to continue secure from danger. Stir not from the house until you hear tidings of me again.—Farewell!—I must not even touch your hand, my child—the fellow notes us too closely—nor can I venture nearer to the light of the door. God Almighty bless you!"

"And protect you, my dear Sir," said Eliza, as he turned his horse's head.

A man and woman, both elderly, holding candles in their hands, and having the appearance of respectable domestics, now stood bowing and curtsying to Eliza at the hall-door. The man stepped out to assist her to dismount. When she touched the ground, she turned round to catch a parting glance of her father. He also had dismounted, at some distance, and seemed preparing to bestride a fresh horse. The obsequious servant ushered her up the steps to the house. At the door she again looked back; it seemed the same figure that a second time met her eye, indistinctly discerned through the gloom, except that, along with the loose peasant's great-coat, a horse-hair helmet now took place of the former slouched hat. The variation made Eliza curious. She gazed more attentively. The person stooped as if to examine one of the hoofs of his horse. In the action, his helmet fell off, and the lights held by the domestics streaming out at the same moment through the darkness, fell on his uncovered head, and fitfully revealed to Eliza a much-dreaded countenance. Stunned at the view, or perhaps, fancy, she staggered into the hall; faintness was closing on her heart;—at the thought of whose house she entered—the house of Talbot—of the individual she believed she had just beheld—Eliza made an effort, however, to rush out; but the heavy door was suddenly shut on her, and retreat cut off.

CHAPTER XII.

That she had been betrayed—that the letter delivered by the woman had not come from her father—that the companion of her rapid ride was not her father—that, remote from friendly aid, she was in the power of her enemy, while the two dear beings for whom she had dared all, and lost all, still remained in prison, or, perhaps, had by this time ignominiously ended their lives—these were the conclusions that instantly forced themselves upon Eliza.

And, with quick combination, every thing now seemed to add proof of the appalling facts. Instead of her father attempting to use a feigned voice, she contemplated his treacherous representative as trying to imitate her father's real one, and depending upon her credulous belief of the first case, to hide his occasional, indeed general, failure. The interference of the guide to hinder their protracted discourse on the road, had been planned, as part of the system of deception. Her companion's frequent fits of abstraction, and his expressive sighs, as they rode along, indicated, not the anxiety of a parent, but the presumptuous aspirations of a lover, with, perhaps, some struggles of remorse, or at least, of doubts and fears of her future estimation of him, or of the consequences of his outrageous conduct. And how could she have been so infatuated as not to have properly understood his start and agitation when she mentioned her husband's name, and his whole evident disinclination to interchange a word concerning Sir William?

Trembling upon a seat in the hall, horror and despair wholly possessed Eliza at the first view of her situation. But she brought to mind that, before leaving the inn, she had resolved to take her chance of either of two results, and to brave her fate, should the present one ensue. This thought rallied her, at least out of a state of mere weakness and inanity. Then she reflected, that if she was lost, so were the only beings with whom she could ever wish to share life; and Eliza told her heart to prepare for destruction with them. With them? Nay, for them! The idea completed her triumph over her position, and despair changed into desperation and terror; and yielding into the stern pride of wretchedness.

"Won't you walk up-stairs to your nice room, my lady?"

asked the female servant, with a very respectful and even tender voice.

Eliza raised her eyes and closely scanned her two attendants, as the one curtsied to the ground, and the other bowed profoundly. Both were attired, and demeaned themselves, as decent upper-servants of that day, and nothing about either gave the notion that she was immediately in the hands of those who would treat her rudely or even unkindly. On the contrary, if appearance could at all be trusted, and Eliza's recent experience seemed to warn her that it seldom could, the man and woman equally showed a benevolent, respectful sympathy with her situation, which might well inspire some confidence.

She arose from the hall-seat, and stood firmly, to her full height, before them, as she inquired with calm dignity,

"In whose house am I?

"In a house, my lady, where hurt or harum daa'r'nt come nigh a hair o' your head," answered the female, still curtsying.

"But who is its owner?"

"We're bound up not to spake about that till the time comes, my lady; only it's owned by one that 'ud turn the world inside out to make pleasure for you, ma'am, and that 'ud no more hurt you, my purty lady, than he'd chop the head off iv his own showlders."

"Answer directly to my question—does this house belong to Captain Talbot, and is it by his agency I have been conveyed hither?"

The man and woman looked at each other, as if mutually endeavouring to ascertain the reply that should be given, and Eliza began to give up her slight confidence in them; or perhaps they were only surprised at her question; she would see.

"We don't know the bould Capt'n you're spakin' about, ma'am, no more than we know the man in the moon: who is he, I wondher, Robert?" said the woman.

"Who is he?" echoed Robert, hesitatingly, "I b'lieve I hard till o' sich a Capt'n, Nelly, some time or other;—but, my lady—" and he bowed his powdered head very low, until his loyal queu protruded horizontally from his shoulders—"if it's in your mind to think that ould Robert manes you any thing worse than goin' about this house, on his two bare knees, to do every command yu'll put on him, may them same two legs be cut off this moment, an' thrun out in the yard for the dog's supper. Have thrust in us, my lady; do, my lady: we're honest ould sarv'nts, my lady, an' we'll lose the life for you, dhrop by dhrop."

"Ah, then, my purty, darling lady, do, an' you won't be sorry—" urged the female, with so much earnestness that tears, sincere or artificial, stood in her eyes; and Eliza remarked that while Robert spoke his voice sounded quiveringly, so that the

two old domestics must be very excellent actors, if she was not, to them, at least, an object of pity, and, so far as they were able to afford it, protection.

Almost instinctively, therefore, at the woman's repeated entreaties, she ascended the stair, her attendant now smiling very officiously and benevolently, and seeming one of the most affectionate beings alive.

"And here it is, my lady," entering a large sleeping chamber; "and here's as nice a bed as 'ud do the Queen o' Morocco to lie down in; but no wise too good for the lodger it 'll have to-night. I'll bring you tay, my lady, or supper, or I'll help you to undhress, or any other comfort you'd have afther your journey, only say id, my lady."

"Do you persist in refusing to inform me into whose house I have been conveyed?"

"We couldn't be tellin' that yet, my lady; indeed we couldn't; an' it wouldn't be for your good to know id, the prasant time; but he's the thrue friend of you and yours, an' don't be unasy, my honey lady: I'm a mother, an' the mother o' daughters, too, an' I'll give you lave to say that any one of *them* is a disgrace to their mother, an' by their mother's own fault, too, if ever you find me doing or saying towards you what I shouldn't do or say."

"Can you tell me any thing of my father?"

"Ah, then, nothin' very particklar," answered the attendant, adroitly hiding some sudden agitation; "only Robert was sayin' he was safe an' sound, my lady."

"Perhaps you have heard Robert mention another person—Sir William Judkin?"

"Never a word, then, my lady; but I'm not curos, all out."

"Well—I do not choose to be assisted in preparing for bed—leave the lights, and retire."

Eliza did not, indeed, seek repose. Although her body was fatigued and harassed, she could not quell her mind to that quiet necessary for sleep. Besides, in her present very doubtful situation, waking and watching were her part, rather than slumber.

Had she indeed seen her dreaded foe? was she in his power—in his house? Might it not be possible that her boding, disturbed state of mind only conferred upon other features, amid the darkness and the hurry of the hour, a likeness to those which haunted her imagination? The appearance and manner of her two attendants certainly strengthened the conjecture.

But why should they refuse to name the proprietor of the mansion in which she was? If they did not fear that she would dislike to hear his name, how arose the necessity for their pertinaceous silence? And what name but one could sound odious to her? Again Eliza relapsed into all her first apprehensions of treachery; and again the picture of her father and her husband, brought to an

ignominious death, rose so vividly before her fancy, that she started up as if to confront a real occurrence.

Thus employed during the few hours of the night, the summer morning found her still waking; and, notwithstanding her previous resolves to nerve herself against the event, still wretched and trembling. Her eyes were red with scalding tears, as she arose unconsciously, at the first summons of the dawn, and looked from her window: and although the old abbey of Dunbrody, an extensive mass of monastic ruin, would at another time have interested her, Eliza heeded it not; nor, although a great portion of her enjoyment of life had hitherto been drawn from the beauties of outward Nature, did she now dwell with pleasure on the fine expanse of water beneath the old ruins' green ascent, nor transfer her admiring glance to the wooded heights, near and remote, some vaguely expressed in the yet lingering mists of the night, some glowing and sparkling in a contrast of sunny clearness.

The uncertainty of her predicament chiefly harassed Eliza. That she was the victim of a plan to separate her from her only friends, while they should be destroyed in her absence, seemed the most likely case; yet it was not fully proved; and if, taking it for granted, she should attempt and succeed in an escape, and if, after all, it turned out to be the fact, that her late movements and her present situation were indeed guided and chosen by her father, the result of her precipitation might be terrible. Then, in reality, she might fall into the hands of the enemy, from whom it had been her parent's care to shield her—nay, and then, indeed, that parent might be exposed by her to inevitable ruin.

Partially, a guiding thought struck upon Eliza. Sir William's note—which she could not bring herself to suspect as strongly as she did the letter purporting to come from her father—advised concealment until he could fly to her assistance; thus he seemed to have been aware of a plan to convey her to a place of safety; if so, he would be with her in the course of that day; for the woman, and the person calling himself her father, had permitted her to reckon confidently upon Sir William's deliverance from prison before the morning, and Eliza would await his coming with resignation.

She would be watchful, too; observe more closely the real characters of the servants in attendance upon her, and, if possible, gain from them more information than they had yet given.

Having thus arrived at something like a conclusion as to the course of action it befitted her to pursue, Eliza's mind grew comparatively calm, although not with the calm of assurance. For the first time, she cast her eyes observantly around her. She was in a bed-chamber arranged with all the elegance which should distinguish a lady's. Two doors opened from it, one into the landing-place, another, as Eliza ascertained by a glance, into a

dressing-room. Both these she secured; and closing the shutters on the beautiful prospect that could not attract her, yielded at last to a natural wish for repose.

But it was a broken slumber that visited her pillow. Her own agonised groan, half-sounding upon her ear, often assumed, corresponding with a frightful scene rapidly conjured up to eke it out, the dying and despairing cries of those she loved; and she would start, and awaken, and rise up on her pillow to fix her eyes on objects that seemed actually present with her. Nature will often, indeed, like a tender nurse, cradle the most wretched to repose, permitting the beguiled fancy to enjoy prospects of bliss of which the waking mind dares not entertain a hope; but with Eliza it seemed as if, in cruel sport, true perception was extinguished only for the purpose of presenting to her mind exaggerations of her real misery.

She could not tell how long her unrefreshing sleep had continued, when she was awakened by the noise of some wheeled carriage, near the house. Arising, in eager anticipation, she flew to the window, opened the shutters, and looked out. It was but a cart passing down the avenue, driven, however, by a man whom, under some circumstances disadvantageous to him, or disagreeable to her, she vaguely remembered to have seen before. In fact, she beheld Sam Stick-leg, leaving the house, after having delivered, according to the orders of his chief, the "little thrunk," which, along with Nanny's chest, helped to load the cart both had driven the previous night from Hartley Court.

Turning from the window, much disappointed, and alarmed afresh, though she knew not distinctly why, at this man's appearance, Eliza heard a cautious step in the dressing-closet; and, before she had recovered from her start, a respectful tap sounded at the door inside, and the obsequious voice of her female attendant requested admission. Eliza opened the door and entered the little apartment. To her surprise it appeared furnished with all the elegancies of a lady's toilet—some of them her own; and, following Mrs. Nelly's arrangements about the room, her astonishment gained its height, when in a wardrobe to one side she discovered the individual habiliments she had left behind at Hartley Court.

She demanded an explanation of this mystery; but Mrs. Nelly would only inform her, that "the purty things were sent by them that 'ud turn the world inside-out to make pleasure for her."

Eliza, according to her plan, proceeded, as cautiously as she knew how, to elicit from the woman the information she had before suppressed; but except a reiteration that she was in a house where all were her humblest slaves, and where "Robert 'ud give out the last dhrop to keep away hurt or harum from her," Mrs. Nelly guarded her secret. And Eliza's suspicions sprung up anew at this obstinate equivocation; and, notwithstanding that

the old dame seemed so good-natured and even matronly in all her little attentions, still there remained a doubt that she was acting a part of specious dissimulation.

The day was wearing away without any appearance of Sir William Judkin, on any account from him, and Eliza's terrors and misgivings returned in treble force. Yielding to an undefined impulse, she left her chamber, and walked through the house. It was tastily and richly fitted up. The thought of escape occurred very strongly. She looked round to observe if she was alone: Mrs. Nelly, curtseying to her glance, stood at the door of the extensive drawing-room, into which Eliza had last walked. She quitted the apartment, and continued to explore the mansion; and now her duenna watched her every movement, and Robert also was often encountered, bowing very low whenever Eliza noticed him with her eye, while at each bow his absurd queu poked out from his shoulders.

"I am a prisoner," thought Eliza; "let me see."

She approached the hall-door. It was locked, and the key removed. She required it to be opened, stating her wish to walk towards the ruins.

"Ah, then, my purty, purty lady," cried Mrs. Nelly, "sure you couldn't think o' sich a thing,—the runes! ay, the runes an' the runation entirely; how do you know, in the wide world, who'd come across you, my lady?—Oh, my gracious goodness! sure that 'ud be goin' in the way o' harum, sure enough."

"I will make the trial—let me have the key."

"The kay doesn't be wid me, my lady; it's Robert shets the dours; he's a careful man: but for goodness sake, my lady, don't go for to put yourself in the way o' them that 'ud do you hurt an' harum."

"That's my affair, good woman: if, indeed, you have been directed to act as my servant, obey my orders."

"Ah, then, it's I got my good commands, my lady, to go undher your feet wid love an' honour, sure enough; an' I'd rather to run o' your arrands nor if it was the Queen o' Morocco was bidding me—"

"Why, then, refuse me the key? I will seek Robert myself."

But Robert was not far off. Eliza discovered by Mrs. Nelly's glance that he stood close behind her own back; and as quickly turning round, she detected him staring with distended eyes at his fellow-servant, and distorting his mouth into a kind of anxious grin, while by raising his arm, and urging it downward, he enforced the meaning of all his grimace, well understood by Mrs. Nelly, as an exhortation not to give up her point. When suddenly discovered by Eliza going through this dumb-show, he started in the utmost confusion, and then observed, giving his usual profound reverence.

"The kay, my lady! the kay o' that dour? oh—ay, the kay; wondher where is it?" looking beseechingly at Mrs. Nelly, who stretched out both her hands, and said, in her most earnest tone,

"My gracious goodness, my lady, for the love of all the things in the world wide, don't be keepin' hould o' that thought—sure they'd run away wid you from us."

"They? who?"

"Who, my lady? that's what we're bound not to tell."

"Then if you refuse to inform me who or what I have to fear, I must doubt your story—and I *will* go forth:—the key, Sir?"

"Ah, my lady, we couldn't, we couldn't."

"Then I am a prisoner?"

"A prisoner, my Lady! Lord save us, Misthress Nelly, sure her ladyship isn't a prisoner?"

"My gracious goodness, my honey, darlin' lady, an' sure you're not—only we've as good as sworn down on the buke to keep you out o' hurt or harum."

"An' my lady," seconded Robert, "out o' hurt an' harum you'll be kep; there isn't one undher the clouds this day, or any other day, 'll daare to look sour at you, while the size o' a midge o' poor ould Robert is to the fore."

"But after all, you will not give the key."

Having received anew a firm though obsequious answer in the negative, Eliza hastened up stairs, all her worst apprehensions overpowering her. Mrs. Nelly followed her quickly with protestations against the thought of "hurt or harum" being meant. Eliza re-entered her bed-room, too closely pursued by the old woman to allow of excluding her, and unable to hold out any longer, sank in a chair, and gave way to her excessive grief. Mrs. Nelly threw herself on her knees before her, and covering her eyes with her wrought muslin apron, sobbed as loudly as the young lady herself, beseeching her to take comfort, and still vouching that "hurt or harum" were not intended; nor amid the paroxysm of her sorrows could Eliza avoid remarking that Robert stood outside the door, also sobbing, and also declaring, after every sob, that "hurt or harum shouldn't come next or near her."

Days thus elapsed, Eliza remaining a prey to the worst fears, yet not experiencing any misfortune more real than those fears, if her imprisonment within the limits of the house be excepted, when something at last occurred dreadfully to aggravate the miseries of her situation, and to convince her that she was indeed the captive of a treacherous enemy; and immediately after, something that led to her escape from her detested thraldom.

It is often, very often, the fate of the heroines of stories, to be carried off by some desperate man interested in thwarting their schemes of happiness; and while we pronounce it irregular, as

well as unfortunate, that so many fair and deserving beings should be exposed to this customary calamity of novels, we also admit the adventure to be a very commonplace one. In the present instance, however, the reader's heroine is, in fact and truth, a prisoner without any invention of ours; and farther, we pray him to approach our last chapter, ere he classes us with the general tribe of abductors, (upon paper,) of beauty and innocence.

Ever since the days of chivalry, too, although almost all the ladies-loves of knighthood have been thus treacherously forced into durance by some dwarf, giant, or enchanter, they have, as invariably been rescued and restored to their friends by some gallant arm; and again we must record, in our heroine's behalf, a similar providential occurrence. But it was no knight, with nodding plumes, that achieved the task, and no pomp of arms such as used to attend the enlargement of lovely captives, graced the event; it was not even an ordinary lover, in plain clothes, who appeared as the deliverer of our Eliza; her freedom was the work of a very humble, but, as the reader has already judged her, a very clever old personage,—no other, in fact, than our friend Nanny the Knitter, who, joined to her love for her ward, so she always considered Eliza, might have drawn from the experience of her own late captivity, a benevolent motive to assist all poor prisoners.

At the reader's last parting from Nanny, she was in view of a cabin, under the roof of which she hoped for temporary concealment from the man whom she had many reasons to consider as "the fell destroyer."

This cabin proved to be the abode of a sister of Shawn-a-Gow, who, many years ago, had been married to a small farmer; and Kitty Gow now found protection in it, since the breaking-up of Sir Thomas Hartley's establishment had deprived her of a more comfortable home. Her aunt's husband, and her two sons, had gone to join the insurgent standard, whether willingly or not cannot positively be stated; but even disinclination could not have served to keep them inactive, as detachments had been sent to rout out the male inhabitants of every cabin, and demur to their summons must have only caused death at their hands. Illness prevented the wife from following her husband, and her daughters remained to attend her; otherwise, poor Kitty Gow might again have wanted an asylum, and the poor Knitter a ready place of refuge.

Under present circumstances, however, old Nanny was favourably received; such indeed must have proved the case amongst any of her acquaintances; nay, amongst total strangers; for even under a roof quite new to her, Nanny never yet had failed to establish herself in the snuggest corner, and to resume the proprietorship of it whenever she again came within its attractive influence.

Nanny displayed her person and her head, sorely bruised and battered, and cried—"Oh! asy, asy, asy, my honest pet!" as Kitty Delouchery, and the commiserating girls of the house, examined various protuberances that felt very soft to the touch. Half the day was spent in the recital of her moving and wondrous adventure, and in moaning and wailing in all the pathos of pain; and at length the poor Knitter felt so really ill as to be compelled "to take to the bed," with a prospect of not rising thence for many days.

This was an affliction to her almost as sore as her durance in the chest, or as the bruises it had conferred; for, upon entering the cabin, she looked to the undertaking her plans for the relief of the heiress of Hartley Court almost immediately; and her fretting at the disappointment, and her extreme anxiety again to have the use of her alert limbs, only retarded her uprise.

But although Nanny's confinement of some days postponed her generous and heroic purpose, perhaps, by affording time for sedate reflection, it contributed to, rather than detracted from, the chances of ultimate success. Her first impulse had been to seek out Sir William Judkin, and inform him where to find his wife; but amid the after-thoughts of her lone pillow, Nanny reflected that, supposing Sir William delivered from prison, (a matter she strongly doubted,) he was, according to the admissions of Rattling Bill, overheard in her chest, either too closely watched to allow of his acting beneficially, or—"The Lord have marcy on his sowl in glory, above, amin!"—dead and buried by this time in the churchyard of Dunbrody. To confer with him, therefore, were impossible, in the latter case; or a useless waste of time, already too much wasted, in the former case. Nay, did he yet live, and live even with full liberty to take his own measures, he would go too hotly and incautiously to work; would too openly approach the place of his wife's concealment, and afford, by his first movement, a signal to Talbot to convey her to some other place, whither neither he nor Nanny could trace her. The result of all these cogitations, therefore, was, that she, Nanny, and no other person,—except, indeed, that "purty Kitty Gow" might be called in as an assistant,—was capable of undertaking the liberation of Eliza. And so, having at length recovered the use of her persevering, if not nimble feet, the Knitter, secretly abetted by the young counsellor just mentioned, engaged in the necessary measures for her exploit.

But, before her appearance on the scene of action, it is proper that Eliza should again be visited in her solitude.

For a few days she had borne up, with what resignation she could, against the agitating uncertainties of her state: Mrs. Nelly, still very obsequious, commiserating, and, Eliza feared, sycophantic; and her colleague Robert, always bowing whenever his

fair charge appeared in view. Upon the evening of the fifth day, after twilight, and while pronouncing her usual parting benediction of—"The blessin' o' God be wid you an' about you, my lady!" Mrs. Nelly handed our heroine a thick letter, and withdrew.

Eliza gazed on the superscription. Again the hand was, or seemed beyond doubt, to be her father's. She hastily broke the seal, and, with what feelings may easily be imagined, read the following terrible communication:—

"MY BELOVED CHILD—

"In a very few days more I shall be free to embrace you, and resume my place in society. My indefatigable friend has succeeded in making a favourable impression of my case upon Government, and we but await the official proceedings, which are to effect an unqualified reversal of the sentence of the court-martial. So, my own Eliza, keep up your spirits, and your admirable strength of mind, to give me a good welcome—and you will need both on another account: though your father is to be restored to you, Eliza, you have much to suffer—yet much to rejoice at, too; much for which to thank and glorify God. Attend:—When, upon the night of our rapid journey to your house of refuge, you asked me questions concerning a certain individual, I did not decline answering them merely because the rude guide might overhear us.—No, Eliza, I was too dreadfully agitated at the mentioning of *that man's* name, to trust myself in reply;—the abruptness of my answer might have destroyed you; or, at best, so much shocked you, as to interrupt our journey, and so provoke the most disastrous consequences. I saw the necessity of allowing myself to cool before we held farther communication on the subject, and of placing you in a situation, where the effects upon you of what I had to tell would be attended with less peril to us all.

"Now, my dearest child, I will answer your questions. You demanded intelligence concerning your husband. You have no husband! Start not, (yet, at least,) nor mistake my meaning. The man—the fiend you call so, yet lives—but you wrongly call him so—he is not your husband! Hearken to an explanation, which can but be given in the form of a statement that, while it fully explains your predicament, will also supply a clue to my late and present situation.

"Before he saw you, or at least addressed you, he had won the heart of a beautiful young creature who loved him to excess—to a wild, a passionate excess, unfeminine, if not degrading. She was the daughter of a woman of high birth, but of passions and dispositions exceeding her own in strength, in obstinacy, and indeed in quality. This wretched mother of a wretched daughter, was at once as haughty and impetuous in spirit, as she was gro-

velling in inclination. Partly to escape a match she detested—partly to indulge an unworthy preference—she eloped from her father's house with a man of obscure birth, mean, and even vicious habits, and who was recommended to her eye alone, by a tolerable exterior, and a bold address. After the first burst of her rash and ignoble passion, she soon discovered to what a wretch she had attached herself; and cut off, by her own act, from a return to her family and to society, she abandoned her despicable companion, husband, I believe, and retired from his view into a remote solitude, where was born the victim of Sir W—— J——'s villany.

"The unhappy woman now had an object in existence. It became her anxious wish and endeavour to educate her daughter for a place in that society which was shut against herself. She partially succeeded; but her lonely communings with her child did not assist other and better impressions, nor help to subdue the dangerous strength of passion, the gloominess of mind, and the haughty and revengeful spirit she had transmitted to her.

"The tempter appeared, and mother, as well as daughter, eagerly countenanced his attentions; the one, because she saw in him a man who, by espousing her child, could place her in rank and station; the other, as I have said, because she extravagantly loved him. His visits to their romantic solitude were frequent;—let me dispatch this point at once:—under a promise of marriage he destroyed his victim.

"After some time, the deluded girl heard that he had paid his addresses to you. Giving way to the stern vehemence of her nature, now heightened by almost every goading passion, she quitted her home, and hastened to confront him. They met in Waterford, where he was transacting some business. Accusations and reproaches passed between them. She taxed him with his infidelity; reminded him of his oaths to her; intimated that she must soon become a mother; and plainly and proudly told him that at the very altar she would step between him and you.

"The wily fiend laughed at her fury; swore that he had never entertained the most remote idea of abandoning her; that the rumour of his attentions to you was false; that his love for her was as strong as ever; and to prove his assertions, he proposed to make her his wife without loss of time.

"Again she trusted him. The circumstance of his procuring a disgraced clergyman to celebrate the marriage ceremony did not arouse her suspicions, although the man was intoxicated while he performed his office, and was incapable of comprehending the rank or even the names of the parties.

"Restored to her destroyer's endearments, she once more gave way to romantic bliss. He proposed a pleasurable excursion on the water about Dunbrody, near to his residence, in which she was to assume her place as wife and mistress. Attended by one

servant, they embarked in a small boat upon the wide river.—Now, Eliza, my dear and precious treasure, so miraculously saved—summon all your strength of mind to note the sequel.—They were in the midst of the expanse of water. Night and silence reigned around them. Her arm was round his neck, and she whispered into his ear her enjoyment of the sweet solemnity of the scene, as his bride, and while the heart was happy. Even in the dim light, she saw his brow suddenly darken. He snatched a pistol from his bosom, and struck her with it on the forehead. She fell, uttering one loud scream; blow followed blow, now dealt by the servant as well as by the master, and she retained, for a moment, just as much consciousness as informed her that both were engaged in perpetrating a preconcerted murder. She had sealed her doom, when she told him that, while she lived she would stand between him and you.

"They must have deemed her dead, under repeated blows, although Providence willed that they should err in their conclusions; for she partially regained her senses, struggling in the water into which they had cast her. Perception again failed; and at its next return, she vaguely apprehended that she was in another boat, rowed by two vulgar men.

"By their conversation, it appeared that, walking by the banks of the broad river, they had heard her scream, and possessing themselves of a boat, which lay pulled up from the influence of the tide, rowed out and saved her. But their farther discourse told that they thought her dead; and by word, by groan, or cry, she did not undeceive them. The first forming of a dreadful resolution, suggested even with the faintest return of consciousness, kept her silent.

"The men conveyed her to a miserable cabin, tenanted by an old woman and her daughter, and one of them undertook to dress her wounds, and skilfully performed the task. This individual manifested towards her an anxiety, and even a gentleness, very different from his boisterous manner to others, for which he roughly swore he could not account. He questioned her often as to the names of the perpetrators of the outrage upon her; but still, though allowing them to see she was now sensible, the sufferer kept her secret. Other pangs besides those caused by the murderous hand of her demon-husband, racked her frame;—nay, he had directly caused even these. The men withdrew; and attended by the old woman and her daughter, she was prematurely delivered of a dead infant. She asked to look upon it; a glance told her that its father's blows had killed it. And there, in that wretched hovel, stretched upon her damp straw, groaning beneath her festering wounds, and feebly pressing her murdered baby to her heart, the purpose before thought of settled into deep resolution. With that broken and despairing heart she swore, should she live,

to live but for revenge; and for a revenge she regarded as rightful.

"But it seemed that she could not live; and the boisterous man inquired if she had no relations to whom it would be well to convey intelligence of her state. Still she was silent; until, at a moment when she thought her death inevitable, she called him to her side, and mentioned her mother's name. He started—and seemed as much agitated as a man of his nature and habits could be. An explanation ensued; and in the person of her vulgar and swaggering deliverer, the unhappy girl discovered a father.

"He left her to seek the abode of the wife who for nineteen years he had not seen, and the victim's mother flew to her miserable couch. The shock almost instantly killed that haughty and fallen lady; the only hope of a whole life lay wrecked before her; and her last sob was given upon the feeble body of her child —but not before she had caused the sufferer to clasp hands with her across the little corse that lay between them, and renew the oath previously sworn.

"The widowed and childless orphan saw in this additional misery of her mother's death, fresh cause to repeat, indeed, and to strengthen her former dread resolution. And even her profligate father, who witnessed the scene, knelt, unasked, and voluntarily devoted himself to act as the agent of her vengeance.

"His daughter, though at another time she would have shunned all connexion with him, now felt no shame of the parent who appeared fitted, as well as anxious, to promote her purpose. And he obviously seemed as much awed into interest by the lofty and lady-like character of his newly-discovered offspring, as he was induced to aid her at the prompting of any natural affection. In obedience to her first wishes, he and his companion secretly conveyed, to a certain place of burial, the corse of her mother and of her infant. Returning to her straw couch, he was fully admitted into her confidence: and he swore to place her destroyer at her mercy, under circumstances that would permit her to deal with him as her dark heart longed, and had more than once vowed to do; and, while she yet lay prostrate, he set off to contrive the secret capture of Sir W—— J——, before he should become wedded—nominally—to you, Eliza;—for the prevention of that event was as anxiously desired by your wretched rival, as was the accomplishment of her actual revenge upon her husband: indeed, she had instructed her father to prevent it by any measures he could devise, provided that, in the meantime, J—— escaped his grasp.

"You have seen, Eliza, the man so often mentioned. You saw him in the character of a juggler upon the review-field, almost the first day of his appearance abroad, in prosecution of his plans. You know, too, of one of his attempts to secure the person of his

daughter's betrayer: I allude to the night when Priest Rourke rescued Sir W—— J——. But, governed by his double instructions, he intrigued to prevent the expected marriage between that fiend and you, at the same time that he sought to get him into his power, lest—as indeed it proved to be the case—his efforts in the latter instance should fail. And now I approach a part of my statement which relates to my own recent and present situations, as nearly as it does to yours.

"Although this agent, Nale, felt, perhaps, really zealous for his daughter's sake, his character, and the habits of his whole life, rendered it impossible that he could act even in her regard without at the same time attending to his personal interests. In this view, instead of openly coming to me, and warning me of my beloved child's danger, he sought out your old admirer, Harry Talbot, of whose former relation towards you he soon made himself aware, and from whose chafing state of mind he cunningly calculated his own mean advantages. And by slow degrees, only, and indifference to repeated bribes, did he communicate to Talbot any important information; although, at the very first, he declared himself the possessor of a secret which would prove J—— a villain, at the mercy of the laws of his country, and effectually put an end to the acquaintance between you and him: thus, of course, arousing in the breast of the rejected lover an eager interest which he well knew how to turn to account.

"The tangible communication he at last made was contained in the charge preferred against Judkin by Talbot, to your own ear, Eliza. But at the moment when Nale hinted this terrible fact, he had warned Talbot not for some time to divulge or proceed upon it. The man awaited his daughter's restoration to health, or at least, a renewed consultation with her, before he would authorize a story, of which her personal appearance was the most necessary proof. But, hurried away by his mingled feelings of love for you, and, I believe, sincere alarm on your account, your old friend forgot this warning; and thus Nale, still unable to advise with his daughter, did not hesitate to deny, before Magistrate Whaley, that he had ever been authority for the startling accusation.

"Meantime, a day was named for your marriage, and Nale, consistently with his atrocious character, had recourse to the most diabolical scheme for preventing its occurrence. And again you will find him urged on as much by a base selfishness, as by zeal in his true cause, for exertion. He planned, that if he could make out against J—— or me a plausible charge of disloyalty, the arrest of either would at once postpone your union, and entitle him, as informer, to a high reward; in other instances, he has played double with the wretched insurgents; but from this speculation, considering the importance that must attach to his services on account of our rank, he hoped to draw superior advantages.

"It is to be presumed, that, with the chances of success equal to his view, he might have preferred J—— as the victim of his peculiar rascality; though I question even that, seeing how determined his unhappy daughter was to get her destroyer into her own hands, that she might herself inflict vengeance upon him. At all events, Nale could not fix on so many appearances in J——'s conduct and actions capable of being turned into evidence of disaffection, as he detected in mine; and accordingly, although J——, too, was arrested along with me, in order to secure a separation between him and you, and, indeed, to dispose him for the fate to which his desperate wife had doomed him, against me became directed the immediate shafts of false evidence.

"I come to the last fact that it is at present prudent to communicate. The very night before the day appointed for your marriage, your poor rival, at length able to exert herself in her own behalf, sought out Nale, and learned from him his abominable scheme for carrying her wishes into effect. She learned, in real horror, that the villain had coolly sacrificed me, as well to promote her purpose, as to gratify his own thirst of money. She flew to a person who, without exposing her despicable parent, might, she hoped, interfere to protect me. That person had already known of Nale's plot, and, certainly in the most sagacious way, had resolved upon measures to defeat it. The result proves, indeed, how wisely, as well as how anxiously, he exerted himself to save your father, Eliza; for I speak of the friend before mentioned, to whom we owe all.

"I conclude, by warning you that it is not upon Talbot's previous assertion of the villany of J——, I now require you to credit the statements of this letter. Not even upon the allegations of Nale do I ask you to credit them. I have seen and conversed with the wretched heroine of my dark story, and from her own lips received all the facts I communicate to you. You have yourself seen and conversed with her, Eliza, though not in reference to this subject. She was the bearer of my first letter to you in Enniscorthy, and afterwards your guide to the spot where you met me. And in farther explanation of what I write, you shall see her again, perhaps before I can be quite at liberty to anticipate her visit. One word more I will add about her. It is the wish and effort of my friend and myself to save her destroyer from her personal revenge; although we can but save him for the more sedate vengeance of the laws of his country.

"Farewell, my beloved, my cherished, and wonderfully-preserved child! God's peace be with you where you are, until you can be folded to the heart of your doting father,

T. H.

CHAPTER XIII.

Before giving the letter which concludes the last chapter, the reader was left to imagine the feelings with which it was perused by Eliza, in preference to attempting any description of them. And we must now do the same thing, acknowledging our inability to follow the workings of her heart at the first shock of this demonstration of the fiendish perfidy of Sir William Judkin,—for demonstration Eliza took the letter to be. A doubt of its authenticity never once occurred to her. Every word read like truth, and like the very words of her father: and if for an instant any parts of it seemed strange, and strange only, as coming from him, they were those in which, notwithstanding the clear proofs of Talbot's bad and black character, evident in his arrest of his former friend, and in his conduct to herself at the castle of Enniscorthy, her beloved parent seemed to allude with toleration to that person.

After many pauses, after having often dropped it from her hand, or started up, clinging to her chair; or, feeling possessed of only as much strength as enabled her to reach for a gulp of water, after having often remained motionless in that chair, during several minutes, Eliza at length finished the perusal of this, to her, appalling document. And still she sat motionless, except for occasional shudderings, and tearless, too, when she heard the key turn, with scarce a sound, in the lock of her chamber-door, and then the handle was very gently moved, and a very gentle pull given.

Starting up in the utmost alarm, though she knew not distinctly why, Eliza hastened to ascertain if she had fastened the door on the inside. The bolt was indeed shot home; and she paused with suspended breath to observe what next would take place.

There came two almost silent knocks, as if little knobs of velvet had tapped. Eliza remained still as possible. The soft challenge was repeated; and then, after another pause, the faintest breath of a whisper trembled through the key-hole.

"It's poor ould Nanny, Lady Eleezabeth Judkin, barrowknight, my honey pet."

"Nanny!" whispered Eliza, in reply, utterly amazed: "Nanny! impossible!"

She touched the bolt with her finger, but hesitated.

"Don't be a bit afeard, Lady Eleezabeth, my honey pet; it's poor ould Nanny, as sure as I'm a lump iv a sinner this blessed night."

It was the Knitter's peculiar dialect, indeed, and an accompanying gurgle, quite distinct from any intonation of any other of the human species, which removed all Eliza's doubts, and convinced her that her old counsellor sought an audience. Imitating Nanny's proceedings, she gently undid the bolt; and it seemed that, without the slightest creak, the door self-unfolded; for Nanny had continued to hold the lock-handle in the opening twist, to which her second evolution brought it; and then, an inhabitant of the regions of spirits never moved more noiselessly than did the very palpable old dame. Giving a peculiar look of caution, she very slowly coaxed the door to its closing position, and as slowly, and quite as imperceptibly to the ear, permitted the self-acting handle to revolve until it had again stolen into its place the bolt it commanded.

"Nanny!" Eliza continued to repeat, "I can scarce believe my eyes;" and the sight of the old woman was some little comfort to her heart, inasmuch as from her habits of close, and all but omnipresent observation, she instantly reckoned on receiving some welcome or necessary tidings concerning the world without.

"Hooshth, hooshth, Lady Eleezabeth, my honey!" cautioned Nanny, as she completed her precautions of bolting, and even locking the door, each operation being just as noiseless as any that had preceded it.

"Have you been sent to me?—and by whom?"

Nanny repeated her "hooshth," for she had not yet quite done with bolt and key.

"Or if not, how, in Heaven's name, have you found your way hither?"

"Hooshth, Lady Eleezabeth, my duck-o'-demons!—discoorse asy, or wer'e spiled for ever: them ears o' Nelly abroad, though they're on the head o' the gossip o' me, that stood for the little daughther I have doin' for herself in Ross town, they'd hear the dhroppin' o' the weeniest minikin that ever stuck in a stomacher. So we'll stale as asy as ever we can, an' we'll plank ourselves doun in the corner beyant the bed, where the candle doesn't shine; an' where the talk 'll be kep in, an we'll convarse about what brought ould Nanny to be so bould afore a lady o' the land."

And with the velvet pace of a cat, when stealing over the carpet in an apartment where she knows she has no right to be, Nanny led the way to the secret corner, and while Eliza occupied a chair opposite to her, there "planked herself on her hunkers," and resumed,—"An' it's who sent me to you, you're axin', Lady Eleezabeth, my honey; an' sure, barrin' Divine Providence, this

blessed an' holy night, no one sent ould Nanny bud herself; an' many a weary turnin' an' twinin' she had afore she could bring her pour ould four bones fornent you, my honey pet."

And even under the urgent circumstances of the present case, when she knew and felt in her heart that every moment uselessly spent exposed her to detection, Nanny yet commenced her series of details with that very one she might have omitted, so much was she accustomed to a leisurely, digressive ramble, as well in her discourse, as in her personal peregrinations. It happened, however, singularly enough, that on this occasion, her idle gossip to her young patroness supplies the last link of her proceedings since we last saw her, with which, previous to the despatch of her real business, it may be necessary to acquaint the reader.

The day before her present appearance, she had called, just by chance, as it were, to visit, in Captain Talbot's new house the same housekeeper, Mrs. Nelly, with whom she had formerly been intimate in that gentleman's other house, about two miles from Hartley Court, and who was, indeed, godmother to "the little daughther iv her." The gossips relished each other's society, and, with slight pressing, though much would have been offered if necessary, Nanny agreed to "stop the night." Towards evening, in consequence of some cautious hints, Mrs. Nanny took her visiter to inspect the fine new house; and Nanny saw the inside of every room under its roof, except two, which, according to her cicerone, were occupied by an "ould friend o' the masther's hidin' in 'em from hurt an' harum."

This hint was quite enough for the observant Knitter. The friends returned down-stairs to their tea, and Nanny, with great satisfaction, saw her hostess infuse a considerable quantity of strong whiskey into each cup, as a sovereign remedy (and Nanny agreed that it was) against what Mrs. Nelly called the "wather-flash in the stimach." But for this night she took no advantage of her discovery of the housekeeper's habit of thus prescribing for her imaginary complaint.

Next morning, "afther her good break'ast, bless the providhers!" the old woman set out to complete her arrangements with Kitty Gow, promising to return "by the night-fall to her little bit o' supper, an' a snug bed for hersef." She kept her promise; and, soon after Mrs. Nelly's departure from Eliza, joined the housekeeper in her room, and found her again much troubled with "the wather-flash," and disposed to attack it with her usual specific. And now Nanny's praise of the remedy was downright eloquent, and she kindly admonished Mrs. Nelly to repeat it more than once; nay, when the most violent "wather-flash" must needs have been got under, (else were there no virtue in the medicine,) the patient consented, after a little earnest advice from her friend, to put "jist another three or four spoonfuls in her tay, to hendher id

from comin' on in the night-time;" so that, long before her usual hour, partly under the influence of the powerful soporific, partly under that of Nanny's no less lulling accents,—a monotonous rumble of voice, well calculated, like the wind through a keyhole at night, to set any one aleep,—Mrs. Nelly began, as her crony termed it, "to pay compliments;" that is, with gradually-closing lids, to drop her head on her breast, raise it, half conscious of the weakness, and then, as suddenly let it drop again; her mouth wearing all the while a curious kind of vague smile, that seemed to betoken her last fading sense of a polite necessity to respond to the unheard gabble of her entertaining guest."

By degrees Nanny lowered her voice, lest an abrupt change from talking to silence might have an unwished-for effect; and at length rejoiced to see that the housekeeper slept profoundly. In a few minutes afterwards she was at Eliza's chamber-door, but not for many minutes after that she had finished to her liking the first account of herself, which is here considerably abridged, in deference to the impatience of the reader.

Her next roundabout story consisted of a minute account of the secret arrangements of Kitty Gow and herself to accomplish the escape of Eliza from her state of durance; concluding with the intelligence that Kitty waited that moment, with a horse and pillion, in a secret place near to the house, to become the guide of our heroine to the town of Ross, where Nanny's daughter would afford to both a shelter and a welcome.

Eliza now naturally inquired into the reason for Nanny's great anxiety to remove her from her present situation. She had heard the old woman confirm her own first suspicions, that she was under Talbot's roof, and thence inferred, doubtless sufficient cause in her own mind, for abandoning it as soon as possible, but she foresaw, that merely this fact could not endue her friend with the unusual zeal she now manifested.

The history, at full length, of the Knitter's imprisonment in the chest followed; involving her report of the direful discourse held between Rattling Bill and Sam Stick-leg during her itinerant captivity. Eliza listened in great agitation to Nanny's version of the declarations of Nale with respect to herself and Sir William, by which it strongly appeared that the young Baronet was to be murdered, as she had been ensnared and deprived of her liberty, in order to forward the views of Talbot upon herself;—"He's only waitin', my honey pet," said Nanny, half reporting, half commenting, "until the darlin' iv a Sir William 'll be berred in Dunbrody, abroad there, an' then he'll make you marry him in spite o' the world." And at this intelligence, so much to be relied on, Eliza instantly began to recur to all her former conclusions of treachery, and no doubt,—wondering how she could for a moment

have omitted to do so—the last epistle, professing to come from her father.

Nanny could not be raving or romancing. The zeal and the disinterested heroism with which she had dared so many dangers to avert from her patroness the evil she believed hung over her, proved that she was not: proved that her motive to action must have been derived from the unquestionable evidence of her very correct ears. And if so, did it not appear plain that the whole story of Sir William's perfidy, as well as the letter which conveyed it, was invented by Talbot to further his presumptuous hopes of Eliza's favour! to dislodge his rival from her esteem, in order that a vacant place might be left for his future recommendation of himself! Nay, such recommendation had already lurked in the artful pages of that very letter: seemingly, under her father's hand, the wily enemy had sought to place some of his former actions favourably before her; and Eliza brought to mind, that even while no doubt of the beguiling document occurred, she had instinctively wondered, considering it penned by her father, at that obvious discrepancy; and from all this new conviction, her heart turned not only with renewed interest, but with trembling alarm for his safety, to the slandered and persecuted Sir William, and in the belief that she, as well as his foes, had wronged him, tears of self-reproach filled her eyes, followed by tears of joy that she again could think him worthy of her confidence.

But she was yet to receive more decisive proof of the truth of her reasonings. While reporting the memorable dialogue held at each side of the chest, Nanny had, as yet, forgotten or suppressed many important passages; for example, to say nothing of Nale's allusions to his being directed and "driven," by some unknown woman, in his designs upon Sir William Judkin, she never once repeated the words of that scoundrel and his comrade, in reference to Sir Thomas Hartley's death: and while the former omission might have been merely accidental, the latter, perhaps, chiefly arose out of delicacy to Eliza's "throuble, on the head o' the hangin' iv the darlin' father iv her;" for so Nanny afterwards professed; it never having entered into her thoughts to conceive that Eliza had so long remained ignorant of what "all the world were risin' up their hands and eyes, wondherin at."

In answer, however, to Eliza's inquiries concerning the last account our Knitter could give of Sir William Judkin, the overwhelming intelligence at length reached our heroine.

"Iv all the nights o' the year, Lady Eleezabeth, my pet, it was last Monday night, or 'twould be the fitther to call it last Tuesday mornin', an' we wor hard at work, mysef an' Misthress Flannigan, an' Misther Flannigan, the butler, hidin' the plate an' all the things at Hartley Coort from the covetous yeomen, that we spected 'ud call back to take a loock at id afther we knew for

sart'n that the darlin' Sir Thomas,—God be good to his sowl in glory! amin,—was murthered from us——"

Eliza, with a quick catching of her breath, seized the woman's arm.

"Hah! what do you say?"

"Not all out so arly in the night, Lady Eleezabeth, my honey; my ould tongue said it too pat—no, not till about two hours, or two hours an' a half afther, as I haard from the mouths o' many that knows it well—yeomen, that stood by at the gallows' foot, as well as others—"

"Wretched old woman, be brief! what gallows' foot? whom did they stand by to see executed?"

"Ochone! ochone! an' who, an' who! an' who ud be worth talkin' iv, Lady Eleezabeth, my honey pet? who, when so many are sthrung up like dogs an' cats every hour o' the blessed day an' night! who, bud him that the world wide, man, woman an' child, are cryin' afther, from that day to this;—last Monday night, or what's the fitther to call id, last Tuesday mornin'! who, who, my poor graw iv a pet, but the honey darlin' father o' you, Lady Eleezabeth, you poor crature!"

Ere Nanny had quite ended, her auditor, without a single cry or groan, lay senseless at her feet.

It was a considerable time before the appalled gossip could succeed in restoring animation. As she seldom, however, allowed her feelings to overcome her judgment, Nanny actively engaged in all the usual methods adopted on such occasions, and at length saw her young friend able to sit up and gaze around her. Then the old dame, conscious of the enormous impropriety she had committed in not ascertaining the extent of Eliza's information with regard to her father's death, previous to her own abrupt allusion, hastened to make a lowly apology."

"I ax God's pardon, an' your pardon, Lady Eleezabeth, my darlin' o' the world," and pushing herself from her sitting position on her heels, to her knees, she fell on the palms of her hands, and three times kissed the floor at Eliza's feet.

"Say once again distinctly, what you said just now—let me be sure I understand you," commanded Eliza, in a hollow voice.

"It was about—" whispered Nanny.

"My father!"

"Och, ay! but I'm a'most afeard to say it again, you look so frightened, my honey pet."

"Go on!" and Eliza did not abate one scintilla of the information Nanny could convey. That her father had indeed been executed upon the night of her rapid journey from Enniscorthy to her present place of imprisonment—that Captain Talbot had been foremost in precipitating his fate—that, in the same spirit in which he had refused our heroine admission to the castle of En-

niscorthy, he had also openly repulsed the witnesses who came to tender their evidence in favour of his old friend—and finally, that, in the dead hour of night, he had stood at the gallows' foot until the last breath escaped his victim; all this Eliza learned as matter-of-fact publicly known for many days past, and not denied by Talbot himself.

Benumbing to her mental faculties as was Eliza's tearless despair at this information, still she received from it the last incontrovertible proof, that since the moment of the strange woman's appearance before her in the inn at Enniscorthy, down to the present hour, deception and treachery had been practised upon her. It now admitted of no debate, that the two letters bearing her poor father's signature were base forgeries, that an impostor had personated him during her flight to Talbot's house, and that the author of this tissue of vallany and deceit—the monster, Talbot, the murderer of her father, perhaps of her husband, whom in his insidious epistle he had so slandered—detained her under his roof, only awaiting his time to present himself before her.

While these thoughts became fixed in her stunned mind, Nanny watched her with much alarm, for Eliza, sitting still as a statue, and her face pale and rigid as death, kept her dry burning eyes vacantly bent on the old woman. The Knitter, by all forms of condolence with which she was acquainted, tried to break through this most wretched of all the manifestations of grief, interlarding her appeals with continued allusions to the necessity for instant flight from the house in which they then were, and to the perfect state of readiness in which they would find Kitty Gow, close at hand.

"Come!" at last exclaimed Eliza, starting up with a suddenness that made Nanny bound aside, frog-like; and her patronness immediately set about arraying herself for a journey.

Nanny, still more alarmed at the uncalculating noise occasioned by Eliza's vehement motions and proceedings, humbly remonstrated upon the necessity of "doin' every thing quiet an' asy;"—also adding, that before they could venture to leave the house together, it behoved her "to stale down stairs, widout makin' mooch noise wid her feet," and ascertain if all was favourable for their perilous attempt.

"Go, then!" said Eliza, in a tone of voice still so little modulated to the necessities of the case, that Nanny saw it would be better not to provoke her into farther conversation. Without another word, therefore, the old woman got through all her silent process of unlocking, unbolting, and unlatching the door; and as Eliza, now attired for her expected flight, fixedly and almost sternly watched Nanny's exit, she began to regard the creeping creature but as an accomplice in the general plot so direfully perfected for her ruin.

With her throat parched and choking, but her impulse to scream aloud kept down; with her person erect, and braced in desperation, while her clasped hands met beneath her bosom; and with her yet unmoistened eye fixed upon the half-open door—thus stood Eliza at Nanny's return from reconnoitering the state of the garrison. The deep, stilly expression of her otherwise inexpressible woe—the stony composure of her features and lofty figure, in the silence and dim light of the spacious chamber—caused Nanny to start back, as soon as her grotesque person slid over the threshold. But, recovering herself, she gave a sign that circumstances seemed to favour their intended escape; and in a few minutes, partly owing to Mrs. Nelly's "cure for the wather-flash," partly to her keys, which Nanny "jest borried" from the nail on which they hung, Eliza occupied a pillion behind Kitty Gow, who, with her right knee over the pummel of a man's saddle, and her left foot not in a lady's stirrup, a whip in her hand, and a little bonnet tied down close to her ears, sat prepared to conduct Eliza from her abhorred prison. And thus humbly mounted, and with a girl as young as herself, and, at least in happier days, not unlike herself in character, to act as her esquire, did the heiress of Hartley Court prepare to fly the dangers that threatened her.

"It's to Ross town you're for goin', Lady Eleezabeth, my darlin' pet," said Nanny, as she stood a moment at Kitty Gow's stirrup—"only six or seven miles, or thereaway, from us, an' where the little daughter o' me will do her best, as in duty bound, her an' hers, for ever, bless all good bennyfacthers, to keep you out o' harum's way—an' the road afore you is clane an' clare iv them foolish, wicked Croppies that's behavin' themselves so bad elsewhere—an' Kitty Gow, my honey, jest tell Nance that, by the same token an ould woman was wid her last Christmas-day—an' she'll know what ould woman you mane—an' gave her, unknownst to a livin' sowl bud their own two sefs, four hundhred in oaten male for the child's Christmas-box; an' I'll be wid ye mysef, Lady Eleezabeth, my honey jewel, to-morrow arly, plase God I live so long, an' gets safe an' sound out o' the one house wid Misthress Nelly;—an' lookee, Kitty, my pet," sinking her voice, so that Kitty only might hear her, "you have your own throubles to make you sorrowful, an' to keep the smiles from your two purty cheeks, an' to make the pleasant voice o' you be more dushmal nor it's used to be—bud, Kitty, my honey, Lady Eleezabeth's throubles is greater than yours by far, an' if you'd thry to rise her heart wid some merry stories on the road, an' maybe a merry laugh, an' the light heart, an' the quick thought an' word, at whatever may come across ye—God purtect the both! an' I don't mane that there's any danger—why, then, Kitty, my graw, you'd only be doin' what 'ud be the kind thing, an' the dutiful thing, in regard to one o' the ladies o' the land that the

likes iv us has no right to compare oursefs to, or to laugh when they laugh, or to cry when they cry, or to think in our throubles when they're in their own throubles—to say nothin' o' what you're beholdin' for to her an' hers, or nothin' iv the boy that you wish well, that et his bread, an' dhrank his sup undher their roof, an' that you know I always had a good notion of, for your sake."

In the same low tone in which she was thus admonished, Kitty assured her counsellor that her own love and pity towards our heroine did not require to be excited into the disposition necessary for the sacrifice of her personal sorrows upon this extraordinary occasion; and that, in every respect, she would exert her spirits to—as Nanny expressed it—"rise Lady Eleezabeth's heart."

Adieus were interchanged; Kitty whipped her indifferent steed; and almost at the first step of their journey, she found herself appealed to for the observance of her promise to the Knitter. Hitherto, Eliza had kept the rigid stillness of manner, and the deep silence, in which she quitted Talbot's house. The motion of the horse acted as a keen remembrancer to her heart. She turned her head, and glanced at the hated house from which she was about to fly; her desolate situation appeared to her in a new, an afflicting, a tear-starting light; the thought of her father's death began to put in play all the sources of natural grief; she again turned her head, and looked upon her humble and feeble, and yet her only protector,—and at last came the bursting shower, as, passing her arm tightly round Kitty Gow, she allowed her head to droop on her guide's shoulders, sobbing out, "Poor girl, poor girl!"—for by quick apprehension, she brought to mind Kitty's late misfortunes, not unlike her own; and sympathy for the humble maiden's similar state of unbefriended misery, mingled with and made a part of Eliza's individual suffering.

Nanny had warranted that their road should prove free of the dangerous commotions which elsewhere must be encountered. But the result shows that however skilled she might be in other matters, she knew little of military movements, though, perhaps, she is entitled to an apology on this occasion, inasmuch as since nearly the first outbreak of the insurrection until she set off to reconnoitre Talbot's house, she had been confined to her bed, and so separated from almost all communication with any of her fellow-creatures who could faithfully report public proceedings.

But in fact, upon this night nearly the whole of the county of Wexford was in the hands of the insurgents; and already they contemplated a serious extension of their victories, by attacking the town of New Ross, the readiest passage into the county of Kilkenny, where they expected to be joined by new reinforcements. The defence of Ross, therefore, became an object of considerable importance, and all the military force that could be collected were sent thither in expectation of the threatened advance

of the victors of Owlard hill, of Enniscorthy, of Wexford, and of other places; so that Nanny could scarce have chosen a more insecure destination for her protegée.

Again, it is to be noticed, that if Eliza's mind had been disposed to receive impressions congenial to its former tastes, she would have received much pleasure from the very beautful night-scenes surrounding her during a part of her journey. At different parts of her route she might have caught glimpses of an expansive river, overhung with great masses of foliage, some blank and colourless, but boldly relieved against the clear sky, and others chequered by the young moon, which, since her flight from Enniscorthy, had been growing in the heavens; and as she approached the town, extension and variety of this class of scenery might have continued to raise her admiration; Nature, not immersed in impenetrable sleep beneath a rayless night, but half hidden, half revealed, rather enjoying a gentle slumber; while the timid light of the serene concave was reflected in the broad and smooth river, and mingling heights, clothed in their graceful woods, sloped down to bound its waters, or, pausing, at a distance, allowed the soft meadow to stretch to its margin.

But Eliza had little perception for outward objects or appearances; or perhaps she attended to some of a character different from such as have been glanced at, yet in unison with her mood, or appealing to her situation. When, as was often the case, the burning cabin or mansion sent its sudden red glare against the sky, turning the moon's silver radiance into a sickly pale green, and tinging the summer hue of the woods as if with the soiled, rusted tints of latest autumn, Eliza's eye became momentarily interested; and the wild and distant shouts that, accompanying the occurrence, rang through some remote and unknown solitude, appealed still more directly to her terrors, her memory, and her mental associations.

Kitty Gow, who quickly saw how much in error Nanny had been as to the safety of their route, exerted herself to curb the new agitation thus often created in Eliza, and which she felt manifested by a sudden start, an increased pressure of the young lady's arm round her waist, or a quick catching of breath, as if a scream was sought to be kept in. She augured good fortune to their journey; she promised happily for the future, and for Sir William Judkin; she alluded resignedly to her own late sorrows, and gaily to the successes of Tim Reily, which had been spirited to her ears, and which promised to make him a Croppy captain, at least. Nay, she ventured to sing some of his songs, composed under her inspiration; such as the "Pride o' the Slaney," which the reader may recollect, and some half-amorous, half-patriotic farewells despatched to her since his enlistment under the Insurgent flag. And yet Kitty's heart was not quite so forgetful of her poor bro-

ther's death, of her mother's madness, and of her father's ruin and desperation; nor, indeed, so much at ease concerning the safety of Eliza and herself upon their present journey. In case of the occurrence of any thing dangerous, she depended, however, to no very modest extent, upon her own presence of mind, her adroitness, her "gift o' the tongue," and, be it added, her comeliness. But, notwithstanding her arrangements against ill-chance, the young fugitives approached, without accident or question, very close to their destination.

They were now within less than a quarter of a mile of the town of Ross. On the one hand a wooded hill, drooping its foliage over the road, darkened their way; on the other a rich flat, thickly interspersed with trees, and beautified with streams of moonshine and mysterious depths of shadow, extended to the river, which also caught snatches of the last light upon its waters. There was no breeze; not a leaf trembled. The air was soft and genial; and but that the nightingale's song is never heard in the groves of Ireland, it were a sweet scene and hour for her melody. Instead, the little black-cap was chanting on a willow by the water's edge his comparatively imperfect, yet not disagreeable ditty; and the land-rail was creaking through the silence of the dewy meadow.

Eliza had sunk into a fit of wordless and all-engrossing sorrow, notwithstanding Kitty Gow's best efforts to cheer, when, in the midst of this tranquil and lovely scene, a peremptory voice gave the challenge,—"Who goes there?"

The words sounded near to them, under the shadow of the overhanging trees. Eliza clung closer to her guide; and Kitty inwardly saying, "Now for it, if he's not too ould to be bothered wid a purty face, an' a glib tongue," reigned up her horse, and answered aloud, "It's a friend or two is here."

"Advance, friends, and give the countersign," and a mounted dragoon came forward from the darkness and confronted them.

"Take no notice of any *rhamaush* you'll hear me say, my lady," whispered Kitty.

"Aha! a brace o' girls!" said the dragoon, "where are ye goin', my lasses?"

"Why, Sir, we b'lieve this used to be the road to Ross town, an' we're goin' there," answered Kitty Delouchery, so disposing herself as to give him some idea of the really pretty face that seconded the merry voice in which she spoke.

"An' what's your business in Ross, my girl?"

"Why, Sir, an' I'll tell you that too. We're two protestan' girls, an' we live a' one side of Enniscorthy, about a mile or so;—if you're not too exact wid us, sure we'll give you good measure;—an' these Croppies, they burnt the house while the father was out wid the yeomen, an' we had to run for id, an' he's in Ross afore us, an' we're comin' to look for him."

"Well, that's all to be seen. You are prisoners until you account for yourselves—come with me!" and he seized the bridle of Kitty's horse, and led his captive towards the town.

"Who goes there?" challenged another voice, after he had advanced some distance. The videttes soon recognised each other; and the first dragoon delivered the prisoners to his comrade, with instructions to forward them to the guard-house.

"Musha, an' I'm glad of it," reasoned Kitty—"he," meaning her first object of attack,—"he was a good-for-nothin' ould trooper, but this crature looks like a body that 'ud take notice of a body.

Eliza, although very unwilling to seem to countenance Kitty's false statements, as well because they were such, as because she knew they must increase the present danger, if discovered, yet continued silent. Nanny had supplied her with a cloak, such as is worn by the lower class of females; Eliza had unconsciously adopted the disguise; she could not now consistently, or, still with a view to escape suspicion, show a character different from the station it implied; and hence she was compelled to allow Kitty her own way.

"The rustic coquette rightly interpreted the temperament of their new detainer.

"I'd bet a day's pay," said the man, as his more grave fellow-soldier withdrew, "that the girls want sweethearts—eh! my dears?"

"No, Sir, we thank you," answered Kitty; "we'd have more nor enough o' them if we were at home, an' the wars over."

"But you'll want one here, while the war lasts, you know."

"Why, then, that same wouldn't be a bad plan, if a body could make off a boy one 'ud like."

"What do you think of the boy before you? won't *he* do?"

"Faix! an' that 'ud be buyin' a pig in a bag, Sir; I can't see the sort you are at-all-at-all:—but I'll tell you what—I'll show face for face wid you."

"Done, by jingo!" answered the confident dragoon.

"Then here goes!"—she put her hand to untie her little bonnet, and then held it by the edge as she continued—"Mind the word o' command I'll give you:—take your own hairy bonnet in your fist!—the man laughingly obeyed:—"uncover heads!" and at the same moment both accordingly were uncovered, scrutinizing each other; and, so far as the moonlight permitted a decision, the one showed a pretty, smiling face, and the other a fine, manly set of features.

All this time Eliza continued to tremble with apprehensions of the result of Kitty's untrue account of them, and she also felt shocked at the girl's levity. And it was in vain that she pressed

her guide's arm; in vain that she whispered, "Forbear! forbear! at your peril!"

"Are you done for yet?" questioned Kitty of the dragoon, not noticing these hints and commands.

"A'most," he answered in the same bantering tone;—"an' how are you off yourself?"

"Purty well, I thank you; only a little kilt wid the looks o' you, jest as you are wid the looks o' me;—we'd make a likely couple."

"I've no time to get married now, my lass; an' there's no parson at hand if I had; an' I'll tell you more, my hansome pet—I wouldn't if I *had* the time an' the parson at our elbow."

"Well, no matther; whisper;" and she pulled his arm towards her, and he leaned his ear to her lips:—"the sisther behind me on the pillion is sick, poor sowl! an' I can't stop to talk wid you now; bud bring us safe into the town, an' if I don't be stalin' out from her, never a hair on your cap, or more than that, in your whiskers;—bother to you! you spake to me in the night time; I was longin' to be whisperin' wid a sodier."

"You're a darlin'!" answered the captivated dragoon;—"a kiss on the head o' the bargain."

"Wid a heart an' a half;—but mind my sisther!" and it was well for Kitty that Eliza's eyes were turned away; and also well for her, and for her new admirer too, that Tim O'Reilly was not a witness to the sealing of the compact.

"Where'll I see you?" continued Kitty.

"Wherever you like."

"Do you know the—let me think o' myself, for you're afther fluttherin' me a-bit—do you know the church in the town?"

"Right well."

"Ay—bud that won't do,—the church-yard is nigh hand, an' I'm afeard o' sperits. D'you know the Bungeen Lane?"

"Never fear but I do."

"Ay, but that same isn't convanient;—d'you know the cross, in the fair-green, in the Irish town?"

"As well as I know my horse."

"Well, afther you get us into the town, come up to the cross, in an hour's time, an' you'll see somebody stannin' behind it; an' yourself and that somebody 'ill be spakin' together, maybe."

Upon these terms, Kitty and the dragoon proceeded together. The walls of the town had been all demolished, either by time, or by the extension of its buildings; but the gates were yet standing, or rather archways that gates once occupied; and from the road along which our travellers approached, by one of these archways, called the Friar's-Gate, they were to enter New-Ross. As part of the preparations for the expected attack, the inlet had just been

half built up, and farther secured with wooden barricadoes, evidently of hasty erection.

When very near this entrance, a smooth, obliging voice, not unfamiliar to Eliza's ear, was heard to give a preparatory "hem!" as if to clear the passage for speaking, and then, in the most good-natured accents in which the words could be pronounced, it demanded,

"Pray, who goes there?"

"Friends," answered the dragoon.

"I'm sure you are," rejoined the obliging voice; "I am, upon my credit; but you must say 'General Johnson' to me, before I can let you pass—unless you like to pass without my lave," he added, very resignedly.

"Curse you! a purty sentinel you are, with all my heart," laughed the horseman: "but, harkee—here are two girls that must go into the town, for I and they say 'General Johnson' for you."

"General Johnson, an' long life to him!" echoed Kitty—"till to-morrow mornin', when the the boys comes in;" was her mental reservation.

"Very well, very well; I'm happy to oblige you," resumed the civil sentinel.

"Remember the cross, in Irishtown, in an hour," whispered Kitty's new conquest.

"If I'm not there," asseverated Kitty, heartily shaking the hand which had been ungloved for the purpose of duly presenting it,—"I'll give you lave to cut the cross in two with your sword."

Assured and fondly-confiding, the lover helped Kitty and "her sisther" to dismount; then assisted them down and up a deep trench newly dug between them and the gate; and then, once more reminding Kitty of her engagement, took charge of her old horse—in truth, scarce worth the care—and gallantly rode back to his post.

Eliza had heard the last allusions "to the cross," and now shrunk from, as she considered her to be, the criminal Kitty Delouchery.

"You're angry wid me my lady," said Kitty. "God knows, only for your sake, I wouldn't make free wid a sodier o' King George's;—bud we'd be in the guard-house now, only for id."

"You jested, then?"

"Never fear, my lady: I'm not a bould girl, though I used to be a sprightly one, an' a little in the fashion o' makin' fools o' the men whenever it sarved my turn, or come into my head."

"Well, Kitty, I must overlook your departure from the truth, so much less an error than I supposed you guilty of, out of gratitude to your motive; though I believe no necessity warrants us to say the thing that is not, or to promise without intending to per-

form: and indeed I wronged you by so quickly supposing you a wicked girl."

"Thry me, my lady, an' if you don't find Kitty Delouchery honest—why, then—" and Kitty's voice trembled—"why then tell her father of her, an' that 'ill be enough; he'd kill her wid his own hand."

"You may pass, my good girls, with the greatest pleasure," said the burly, waddling sentinel, advancing politely, his cap almost resting on his nose, and both his arms hugging his musket, not affectionately, but in instinctive terror, lest (as a monster of its kindred once before did) it might get loose and play him some prank.

"If I mistake not, Sir, I address Mr. Jennings, of Wexford," said Eliza.

"Upon my word and credit, Miss, and so you do;" the turn of respect was unconsciously rendered to Eliza's superior accent.

"Then, Sir, without hesitation, I claim the protection of your roof; if, indeed, you have a home in Ross."

"Why, upon my credit, my dear," altering his favourable impressions of Eliza, as he very oddly misconstrued her request: "upon my credit, my dear, I don't know how that will be: I'm a quiet, regular man; and though, as it happens, I have a house in Ross, at present I don't think it's a place for young women:—my wife—"

"I see you do not know me, Mr. Jennings, though I thought you would—but look again," throwing aside her cloak, "I am the daughter of Sir Thomas Hartley, who has been a friend of yours, when you lived in Wexford, and who had the pleasure of taking you home safe to your family, after your accident at the review."

"Sir Thomas's daughther?"

"Yes, Sir; at present friendless and unprotected, and compelled to fly from her enemies, and crave the charity of a roof to cover her."

"Oh, poor young lady!—oh, God pity you!—oh, yes, I heard of it.—Oh, dear me!—oh, come, Miss Hartley, upon my word and credit, and I'll see you to my house, sure enough; and my poor wife and little daughthers will be glad and proud to have you in it: they'll never forget, no more than myself, that day, when Sir Thomas, and now I remember, yourself along with him, Miss, handed me out of his own carriage, at the very dour o' the shop. Come, Miss, come—" he was preparing to bustle forward—"but, upon my word and credit, they won't let me lave this till some one comes to stand in my place. Oh, Miss Hartley," and his voice sank to querulous complaint—"isn't it a miserable case for a quiet man like me, that has no more notion—no, I take my God to witness—no more notion of doing any one harm than the babby

on its mother's breast, to be forced to be out of his comfortable bed at this time o' night? marching about, and standing in the could night-air, in this way, and houlding a gun, that you know, from what you've seen, is often the death o' people?"

"Indeed, Sir, I think they might substitute younger men."

"An' them guns has a hathred to some people above others," said Kitty Delouchery, who had heard of Mr. Jennings's accident on the review-field.

"Upon my word I believe you, young woman."

After some farther discourse, Mr. Jennings invited Eliza, and, as he understood Kitty to be, her servant, to wait by his side, upon his post, until he should be relieved, which he expected would very shortly occur. But Eliza was averse to the observation which this might occasion, and also fearful, that by it strangers would become aware of her intention to accompany Mr. Jennings home; a fact she wished to conceal, lest Talbot might profit by it. She demurred, therefore, to Mr. Jennings's offer, and arranged instead, that, until he should be free, she and Kitty would await him at the house of Nanny's daughter, whither Kitty undertook to conduct our heroine; "the ways o' the place" being well known to the young coquette, as may be inferred from her dialogue with the susceptible dragoon.

Until really put to task, the inexperienced human mind can form no idea of its own powers of endurance. If, but a fortnight since, any one had prophesied to Eliza the accumulation of misery which she now experienced, she would have said that her death, or the deprivation of her senses, must have resulted from it. And, indeed, were she called upon only to bear, as she might, the anguish of her father's sudden and shameful death, and the fears of her husband's ruin along with it, it is probable that Eliza might have lay stunned under two such deadly blows: but the eager impulse to avoid a new evil, which, as a woman and a lady, her soul instinctively shrank from, supplied, by a last appeal to her energies, the capability to struggle against her less recent trials.

Eliza's sense of her desolate and miserable situation, however, was not, amid all her present efforts to avoid a fell enemy, the less poignant or absorbing; and as she and Kitty Gow, after much knocking at the door of a very humble house, at last sat down in the little huckster's shop, of which Nanny's daughter was proprietor, to await the charitable offices of Mr. Jennings, her reflections caused her to wring her hands in agony.

Mr. Jennings had fled from Wexford, upon the day of its evacuation by the king's forces, to a brother in Ross, his wife and children accompanying, and often supporting him, along the sultry and dusty road. Unluckily, he did not, upon his safe arrival in the town, lay aside his military jacket, (although he had promptly forsaken his musket,) and he was therefore included in

the general muster set on foot to oppose the continued successes of the insurgents. It will be believed, that he remonstrated against the evident injustice, as well as inhospitality, of thus binding him to the very stake which he had abandoned his own native place to avoid; and indeed he would have bluntly refused again to bear arms, if he did not fear immediate persecution, and very probably death, as a suspected rebel, in consequence of his demur.

Our young adventurers had not to wait long for his coming. "He was let home for a while to take a bit of supper, and God knows it was only his due, afther walking and walking about for three long hours, when he ought to be out of his first sleep."

"I'll carry the goon for you, Sir," offered Kitty.

"Eh!" he cried, amazed at her hardihood, "won't you be afraid of it, child? It's loaded, I protest."

"Not a bit afeard, Sir; often I shot a crow when he'd be pickin' the barley on us."

"Why, then, upon my word, here it's for you—but take care, child—the laste thing in the world would let it off. Oh, Lord! turn the muzzle away, child!" as Kitty, shouldering her piece, slanted it towards him.

Arrived at his own door, Mr. Jennings's timid double-knock, somewhat between the plebeian single blow, and the more elegant tantararara, caused a great fuss within. More than one pair of feet hurried down-stairs; "Make haste, Peggy!" cried a shrill female voice; then two persons were heard unlocking and unbolting the door; "Slip the boult, and I'll turn the kay," was the agreement between the anxious little daughters; and as the father entered, he was so embraced and caressed by them, and by his wife, who now had descended, that for some time his companion escaped notice. He kissed his lady and his children with grateful rapture that he beheld them again, and wiping his forehead of its honourable moisture, bustled into his sitting-room. Here he bethought of presenting Eliza, and stating her name and unhappy situation, she was welcomed with a respectful cordiality which soothed her sick heart. And then ensued the disarming of the soldier; his cap was laid aside; his grievous belts and gaiters unbuckled and unbuttoned; and, at his particular request, in order that none of his family might run the hazard, Kitty placed his musket in a far corner.

A homely supper now appeared, and pressing Eliza to join him, he engaged it heartily. By the time he had satisfied his appetite, his wife handed him a tumbler of whiskey-punch, of which she had previously, and more than once, tasted a little in the spoon, adding at each trial, sugar, or water, or spirits, or lemon, until she quite assured herself that it was exactly of the flavour which, by long experience, she knew would suit her husband's palate; and while he sipped it, he told of his patrolling through the streets.

and of his standing sentinel to keep people from coming into the town, unless they said "General Johnson for him," and sincerely were his warlike labours commiserated by the listeners.

During this, Eliza was permitted, almost uninterruptedly, to pursue her own thoughts; for though her present protectors could do a kind action, they knew not how, particularly if appealed to by their own concerns at the same time, to do it gracefully or very considerately. Kitty Gow had retired to the kitchen. Suddenly a thundering peal rang at the hall-door. All started in terror. Mr. Jennings was peremptorily summoned forth to attend a full muster of his corps: by accounts just received, the entry of the rebels was instantly expected. A scene ensued of bustle, weeping, and lamenting. The poor man himself seemed overwhelmed. Standing in the middle of the floor, "Oh!" he cried, the tears glazing his eyes, "am't I an unfortunate crature, this night to be called to do, at my time o' life, what I never thought I was born to do? Oh!" he gave a lengthened groan, as one of his weeping daughters hung his little pouch across his protruding body—"too tight, Peggy, my love. Anty," to the other who knelt to button his gaiters—"God bless you, Anty!—if I'm never to see you again, Biddy," cautiously accepting his musket from his wife,—"Biddy, you'll take care of 'em if—" his feelings abruptly hurried him out of the room; but he stopped and hesitated at the hall-door, and stopt and hesitated again; framing many excuses to himself for a little respite of time; such as, "he forgot his snuff-box," or, "he wanted to look at the flint of his fire-lock," or, "he'd just wait while Anty ran up for his nightcap, and thrust it into his pocket;—but at length he set forth, his wife and children hanging out of the windows to keep him in view as long as he was spared to their sight, and then they sank on chairs, brooding over the soldier's danger.

Sounds of alarm and battle through the town were anxiously listened for, as the signals of his immediate peril. But none such arose. In fact, the intelligence announced by Mr. Jennings's summoners proved a false alarm; and at an advanced hour of the morning he was returned safe and sound to his family. "He's coming, mother!" shouted the daughters, who had been watching him from a garret-window: and, "Aha, Peggy!" he replied, shouting up to his children from a distance, in a gay and triumphant tone—"they were afraid of us, the rascals!"

Hitherto Eliza had been neglected. In the relief afforded by Mr. Jennings's return, she found herself kindly and officiously attended to. Her wishes were consulted. She was served with tea, that modern and most grateful beverage to the weary, and then ushered to a bed-chamber; where for some time we must leave her, enjoying her repose, we hope, while we turn to other matters which nearly concern her.

CHAPTER XIV.

The little town of Ross is pleasantly, and, for all the purposes of trade and commerce, if either would but come to it, advantageously situated. In fortunate England, it would long ago have been a flourishing and wealthy place; in neglected Ireland, thirty years ago it was, and at the present day it is,—and only give some theorists their way, and at the day of judgment it will still be—a few streets, half alive, with creeping attempts at petty traffic, and encumbered with a suburb of ruinous hovels, which poverty and wretchedness have marked for their own.

About a mile above it, two considerable rivers mingle their waters, and flowing beneath wooded height, or by verdant meadow, form the fine river of Ross, a quarter of a mile broad, almost of equal depth from bank to bank, and allowing, close to the quays of the town, safe anchorage for vessels of several hundred of tons burden.

Upon every side, hills rise precipitously above the more important streets, such as they are, the suburb climbing with them, often against acclivities so sudden as to render the ascent of the pedestrian a work of much labour. From the opposite bank of the river, when the distance is sufficient to obscure the frequent features of want and ruin in the poorer dwellings, and whence are prominently visible some better structures, the church, and a mass of monastic ruins, mingling with and ennobling the cabins on the hill-side, all relieved by height and slope, meadow and plantation, and having for foreground below, the quay, and a few taper-masted vessels at its side,—a whole picture is presented, which the lovers of landscape would pronounce to be as peculiar as it is pleasing.

Although styled New Ross, the little town claims to be of great antiquity. Four centuries since, it supported more than one monastery; upon the ruins of one of which the Protestant church, at present standing on the hill-side, has been erected. Beneath crumbling aisles, whence, in other days, floated the evening chant across the broad water, may yet be visited, close to this new place of worship, vaults, wherein lie scattered the blackened bones of the once powerful or revered ministers of an older ritual, whose knowledge, and often whose hands, reared the lofty structure

which, destroyed by puritanical hatred more than by the gradual touch of time, now refuses a decent grave to the relics of its ancient masters. And stories are related by local antiquaries of passages under the river to the monastery of Rossbercon, that crowns an opposite hill, and where the paltry steeple of a Roman Catholic chapel bears, to the pile that heretofore occupied its site, even a more humbling comparison in the minds of its visiters, than does the confronting church of the Establishment to the massive ruins with which it so badly groups.

Since 1641, when a battle of some moment was fought near to Ross—and when Cromwell, covering Ireland with desolation and carnage, anticipated time in destroying the pile we have alluded to—war had not visited the present scene of our tale. Partly, perhaps, on that account the artificial defences of Ross had been suffered to decay; or, as before supposed, may have been thrown down to allow of the extension of the streets.

Mr. Jennings received Eliza at one of the still-enduring gateways of its old walls; and three similar ones then existed at different points around the town. The complaisant sentinel was on post at the Friary-gate. Another on the hill above, and facing the north, gave entrance, through a thatched outlet, into the main street, which, winding down a long descent, led to the market-house, whence diverged the various other principal streets.

The third gate, also standing on the summit of a hill, fronted the river. High above it, at right angles with the river, clambered, for half a mile's extent, the Irish-town, chiefly composed of the residences of the poorer classes; and here fairs were holden; and here stood the remains of the ancient stone-cross, assigned by Kitty Delouchery as the spot for her meeting with the credulous dragoon; a meeting which, it is scarcely necessary to add, never took place. Whether or not the disappointed soldier adopted her alternative of "cutting it in two wid his soord," may however seem a question; and it is answered in the negative, by stating that the cross can yet be viewed in an unsevered state; but it is not as positively stated that he did not, in his rage and chagrin, at least make the attempt.

From the last-mentioned gate, the third, the descent into the town was indeed precipitous; requiring, from an inexperienced and unexcited visiter, much cautious watchfulness of his feet.

The fourth gate was situated in the hollow to the north, and only approachable down yet another hill. And rows of houses, running upon the sites of the old defences, or other considerable impediments, denied easy access to the town of Ross, except through these gates.

The reader will soon see the necessity of this description in this place; for amid a scene of quick and fiery action, we could scarce pause to supply it; and yet, in order that he may fully understand

that coming scene; it is proper to make him acquainted with the localities of its arena.

Notwithstanding the good omens in which he had returned to his afflicted family, Mr. Jennings was soon obliged to resume his military duties, and starting from a sleep, in which he would willingly have continued till the wars were over, hastened forth in his pinching uniform, and shouldering his dreaded weapon, to join, amid real bustle, his watchful corps.

Horse, foot, and artillery came clattering and thundering into the town; and then, with all the importance of men chosen as its defenders, the formidable strangers went from house to house in search of the best quarters, ridiculing those who could not protect themselves; and bullying or threatening such as were suspected of disloyalty. In the course of the day they became variously occupied in defensive preparations. Some deepened the trenches before the old gateways; others grubbed the pavement of the streets ascending to them, in order to facilitate the labour of dragging up cannon, destined to be mounted at those important points; others strengthened the barriers: the companies not so employed underwent inspection by their officers; ammunition was served out to all; and, amid the general clang and uproar, often might be heard the cries of unhappy wretches suffering torture to compel confession of their presumed knowledge of the plans of the insurgents.

As darkness came on, the sounds of preparation increased and deepened, while they varied. Drums beat to arms; the trumpets gave the note of equipment and muster; with brows of resolute care, the commanders went from post to post; and as each band prepared to stand to arms for the night, or hastened to an appointed position, levity was discarded from the soldier's carriage.

Scouts brought certain intelligence of the approach of the rude enemy, and before night had fully closed in, a moving black mass, composed of the body of the expected assailants, was seen, from the height called Three-bullet-gate, clustering round a country-seat which stood on an eminence about a mile distant. When they could no longer be observed amid the deepening darkness, their screams of defiance reached the town. And then from the point which had commanded a view of their uncouth muster, guns were discharged against their position, with answer of readiness for encounter; and igniting their rusty and badly mounted engines with matches of twisted straw, the insurgents broke the gloom around their high encampment with retorted roar and explosion, while again the great shout of twenty thousand men told of anticipated triumph. The garrison they threatened was something more than fifteen hundred strong.

After this interchange of defiance, comparative silence ensued in the little town; but still there was no relaxation from watchful-

ness amongst its defenders, and no repose amongst its startled inhabitants. Furious assault being every instant expected, the soldiers stood at their respective positions mute or whispering, or calculating each unusual noise that reached their ears. The people, to whom every thing around them was novel, and whose notions of hostile contention were fearfully vague, experienced torturing suspense. In obedience to the peremptory commands of their protectors, they had extinguished their lights, shut up their dwellings, and assumed the stillness of repose; but, indeed, only assumed it; for in every house the inmates crouched together, anticipating the struggle that was to decide their fate; and often did they interpret the sentinel's watchword into the signal of attack, and start and tremble at the measured tread of the patroles.

The night advanced. All remained watchful, anxious, yet undisturbed. And amid this deep pause, two females were cautiously approaching the insurgent position, having escaped, no one knows how, from the jealously-guarded town. By her curious hat, her low, burly figure, and her almost preternatural mode of stumping along without the least sound, we recognise one of them to be Nanny the Knitter; and the free-moving, erect, and tripping girl at her side, is Kitty Delouchery, sent by our heroine, with Nanny as her companion and ally, and after profound consultations between them all the live-long day, to discover tidings of Sir William Judkin amongst the Wexford army of Freedom; and, should he fortunately be discovered, to acquaint him with the present situation of his bride.

About four miles distant from Ross is the hill of Carrickburne, one of those rocky elevations for which, as elsewhere mentioned, the County of Wexford is remarkable, and distinguished at a distance by the hard outline its curiously-curving brow describes against the horizon.* And on this eminence nearly the whole armed population of the county had lately assembled, and thence did twenty thousand of their body descend and take up, at Corbet-hill,—the name of the country-seat previously mentioned,—their position for the attack of Ross.

* This hill is also noted as a horrid remembrancer of the times we would illustrate. Beneath its rugged sides, where a patch of soft verdure contrasts with the surrounding barrenness stood a large barn, used as a prison by the infuriated insurgents, in which a number of human beings, of the two sexes, and of every age, were burnt alive. Whether or not this abominable act is to be visited on the general body of the armed peasants, remains a question. Their historians or apologists deny that it is so, and by their statements we are instructed to seek for the authors of the hideous occurrence amongst the cowardly who had fled from battle, or the ferocious, who were maddened into revenge by burnings and torturings inflicted on themselves or upon their relatives, or committed a short distance from the site of the memorable barn.

The mansion so called was one of some consequence. A lawn, bounded by a semicircular enclosure of trees, sloped to its rear; and another sheltered at either hand by shadowing screens of foliage, descended from the front-door.

Within less than an hour of dawn, the time at which Nanny the Knitter and Kitty Gow visited this place of encampment, few of the rudely-equipped force remained waking. Still covered solely by the serene summer sky, they stretched in dark masses upon both lawns, to the front and to the rear of the house; their sleep rendered intense by the fatigues of many days and nights, or else by the whiskey they had lately been quaffing, and which formed a considerable part of their commissariat stores; or some more cautious slumberers lay huddled together under the imaginary shelter of the branching trees, or in the ditch, beneath the enclosing fence. And female figures might be distinguised amid this stilly multitude of human beings; and at their feet, or on their bosoms, children and infants; for families frequently slept together in these primitive encampments; and, perhaps, before the armed brother, or husband, or son, disposed himself for repose by their side, he first bent his steps to pull them a couch of green hay from the trodden meadow.

The greater number of the men had sank down, clasping their unburnished guns, or their pikes, closely in their arms, as if the business to be encountered at morning's dawn had formed their last waking thoughts. But many weapons, dropped from less careful hands, strewed the grass; and others stood upright in the sod, having been stuck into it ere their owners lay down to sleep. Ill-fashioned flags, with rude devices, generally green, but often of every other colour, save that of the detested orange, drooped in the breezeless night upon poles fixed in the earth; and these were intended as rallying points for distinct throngs at the morning's muster. In the middle of the front lawn appeared five or six ill-matched cannon, two of which were tied with ropes to those small rustic cars, peculiar, we believe, to Ireland.

The principal leaders had taken up their quarters in Corbet-Hill-House; and the scene described would have been one of almost breathless silence, but that some of their number, the commander-in-chief, as he was called, at their head, yet prolonged, amid disjointed arguments upon the issue of the coming day, vociferation or wild shouts of ebriety, which echoing over the lawns, were the only sounds succeeding to the late cries and clamour of twenty thousand tongues. Nor, indeed, did these few signals of waking, where so many slumbered, take away from the deep effect of general repose, nor derive, from the close presence of the stilled host, any thing to disturb the idea that they bespoke a scene of worse than solitary enjoyment.

As yet unobserved and unquestioned, Nanny and Kitty cautiously approached the avenue that led to the house.

"An' there's no doubt, Nanny, but we'll find him here?" asked Kitty, in a whisper.

"He's here, I'm tould, of a sart'nty, Kitty, my honey pet; an' the more's the pity;—what 'ill become iv him when the wars is over, I wondher?"

"Sure the Croppies 'll gain the day, Nanny."

"Ntchee, Ntchee: God help your young head, Kitty, my pet! no, nor the night, neither. King George 'll have the upper hand, in the long run, as sure as I'm a lump iv a sinner."

"Stop, your sowl—listen to that—maybe there's not friends near us," said Kitty; and both listened to the burden of a song, chanted in loud though not unpleasing tones, some short distance in the direction they were taking. After the burden the whole song was gone through, and is here presented, as a genuine specimen of the ballad-making talent of many of the insurgents.

On Owlard-hill the war it begun,
An' its there we gained the North-Cork man's gun;
To take Enniscorthy then was our intent,
An' we're the boys that 'll pay no rent.
Sing the-too-rol-lol, fol-the-too-rol-lee,
Fol, lol, lol, fol-the-too-rol-lee!

Long life to Father John, an' long may he reign,
Capt'n Perry also, an' Edmun' Kane,
It's they will win both counthry an' toun,
An' we'll never give up till we pull the Orange down.
Sing, &c.

Come hither, my boys, that never war afraid,
To walk all night wid your green cockade,
Showldher afther me your pike an' gun,
Every one like ould Grawna's son.
Sing, &c.

A loud and long "all's well!" pealed from the singer's throat as he ended his ditty, and was taken up and repeated by many other voices, near and distant, around the encampment; for, in imitation of the more regular force they opposed, the insurgents, catching the watch-word from the near videttes, pushed beyond the gates of Ross, thus endeavored to manifest their important pretensions to the character of a regular army.

With exulting alertness, Kitty Delouchery tripped forward some paces, and clearing her pipe, chanted in her best key, and that was not a bad one, the following responses to the sentinel's song.

Farewell, my tendher Kitty, it is my cruel fate,
To desert my ruined dwelling, no longer can I wait;

The green flag it is flying, with its harp and shining shield,
An' the Waxford boys, like lions bould, are marching to the field:—
How they shout out to rouse me! and those words they say,
Arise, my Waxford champions, and to victory take your way!

"Success to your pipe, you duck o' the world!" cried the sentinel, running forward;—"come here till I take you prisoner, you rogue, you."

But in some misgiving, Kitty drew back into the shade, as she caught imperfectly a view of the figure that approached. The song, and the tone in which it had been executed, proclaimed Tim Reily; but surely not so did the caparison of the man she now beheld before her.

"Where are you, my darlin'?" he continued; "by the pike in my hand, I'll have you, supposin' I run fifty miles a-head!—aha! Maybe you think I don't see you!" he cried, grasping Nanny the Knitter by the shoulder.

"I'm only a poor ould sinner, my honey,"—began Nanny, in her usual formula of petition; the grasp was loosened.

"Och! tundher-an'-turf! an' sure I made a mistake: an' it's not nath'ral to me to ketch hoult iv an ould woman, instid iv a young girl, either. Arrah, then, Nanny, wasn't Kitty Delouchery wid you?—I'd swear ten oaths 'twas she gave a purth o' the song I made for her."

"Hi, hi!" giggled Kitty from her covert, now certain of her man, notwithstanding his very suspicious equipment.

"An' maybe I don't know the mainin' o' that," shouted Tim as he capered to seek her. There was an instant's shuffling under the deep shadow of the trees, which Nanny could not precisely make out; but after, as she called it, some "hugger-mugger" discourse, she overheard the following conversation.

"Ah, then, for goodness sake, Tim, what sort iv a dhress is that upon you? I'd lay a bet I seen the likes on some o' King George's sogers."

"Faix, an' maybe you did! an' it's a sin an' a shame that the daylight isn't wid us, till you'd see me proper: divil so purthy a hoossian ever your two eyes opened on, a canna."

"A hoossian!—English me that, Tim, an' I'll say thankee."

"Why, then, I'll tell you, Kitty, my duck: them hoossians, they're horse-throopers that's come from far'n parts to fight the poor Croppies; an' if you war to hear 'em spakin'!—the likes o' their talk never came out iv a Christhen mouth afore: bud there's one comfort; it isn't Christhen mouths is on their ugly faces; an' they have two whiskers o' beard over their lips; an' they discoorse like born brothers wid their horses; *urragh*, *vulluck*, they say, an' then the horses makes answer afther the same fashion."

"Sure you're makin' fun, Tim."

"In throth I'm not, Kitty, bud as downright arnest as ever I was in my life."

"You might asy be that, Tim."

"What matther, a-lanna,—we can't be merry in the grave; so, we'll laugh an' be fat here, on the face o' the livin' yearth. Bud, as I was sayin' to you, them hoossians are great bastes for purshuin' the poor counthry girls at every hand's turn; an' so, I was comin' along the road, wid the pike in my fist, an' I seen a hoossian ridin' agin me, an' I hid myself to let him pass by; an' the thruth iv a nate purty crature, crossed a stile, at the same time, an' he spurred his horse afther her, an' as they both war comin' near me, I stepped out, a bit, an' she ran to me, callin' me honest boy, an' axin me to save her; up comes the hoossian gallopin': an' '*ullagh gulluch ghrow fraw thruff*,' says he to myself; '*ulluch, gulluch, gruff*, an' to the ould divil wid you!' says I; an' at the word he reined back his horse, an' made him dance on his hindher legs, that he might have a good slash at me; bud I was afore hand wid him: the pike slipt into the horse's heart, afther a manner it has; ay, an' before he could say *gulluch gruff* to me again, it slipt through his own heart."

"Stout was your fist, Tim: an' so that's the way you got your quare clothes?"

"Faix, an' it is, Kitty! I began to look at him, when I had the time for id; an', says I to mysef, isn't this a green jacket an' a green breeches on the baste iv a fellow? an' sure green is the poor Croppy's colour, an' maybe I won't put 'em on my own sef, jest to be like any soger; so I was skinnin' him of the both, when up comes another Croppy, goin' for the camp, too; an', 'I cry halves,' he says; 'Bother!' says I, makin' answer the way he desarved; 'bother, my boy, go an' kill a hoossian for yoursef."*

Much more characteristic conversation ensued between them, ere Tim at length thought of inquiring why his mistress was thus rambling at night. But as soon as he ascertained the nature of her mission to the "camp," he at once confirmed Nanny's surmises that Sir William was at present amongst the insurgent force on the height; and only stipulating that so long as they remained unobserved, his protecting arm should encircle her waist—(Nanny was not, and indeed did not consider herself a critic from whom any such little freedom ought to be disguised,)—Tim then led Kitty in search of the Baronet; the reflections that his young mistress was thereby to be served, adding energy to his zeal.

While the great throng assembled for the assault of Ross lay

* An expression really originating from the Insurrection of 1798, and well known all over Ireland, though for the first time traced to its real source; indeed, it has become a bye-word in the sister-island; tantamount to "win gold and wear it."

sunk in deepest sleep, and while the most convivial of their captains prolonged their midnight revelry, there was one who neither sought to share the oblivious slumbers of the first, nor the care-drowning libations of the others. With arms folded hard across his body, he paced up and down before the door of Corbet-hill House; and sometimes he would pause, and seemingly after a moment's thought stamp violently with either foot, and again resume his hurried and irregular strides.

"If I'm not a blind man, Kitty, my duck; an' sure, if I was, you wouldn't be dyin' in love wid me as you are; there's the gintleman you want," said Tim Reilly.

"Faix, my honey, it's him, sure enough! make up to him, both o' ye, an' tell him your arrand; becase I'd rather o' the two not to go near him," remarked Nanny.

"Why so, Nanny?" asked Kitty.

"He hasn't a likin' for me, I believe; he was oncet goin' to toss my poor lump iv a body out iv a windee, an' that 'ud be the death o' me, there's no doubt."

Tim and Kitty approached Sir William. He seemed unconscious of their presence until Tim accosted him.

"Here's a purty little girl, your honour," holding Kitty by the arm.

"What does she want, fellow?" questioned the Baronet, stopping suddenly, and speaking so vehemently that both reeled backward.

"She only wants to be spakin' vid your honour," resumed Tim, in a voice of humility.

"Pitch her to the thousand furies!" cried Sir William; "she and all of her sex—and, begone, scoundrel!"

"Pitch her where?" muttered Tim, closing his fingers on his pike-handle; "show me the man that 'll pitch her anywhere, half a quarter iv a yard, an' he won't be thankful for his throuble."

"Never heed the poor young gintleman, Tim; he's cracked vid his thrials, an' doesn't know what he's sayin'," whispered Kitty.

"Threu for you, Kitty; bud I forgot it when he talked o' doin' any thing to you."

"Tim is only comin' to tell your honour where to find the poor young misthress," resumed Kitty.

"Hah!" Sir William again stopped and eagerly fixed his eyes on them,—"where to find Lady Judkin, you mean?"

"Yes, Sir; my lady is in an honest house in the town, there below, an' longin' in her heart to see your honour."

"Lead me thither instantly!" he spoke in high exultation, striking his hands together.

The impossibility of getting into Ross unobserved now that the

day had begun to break, was stated to him by Kitty and Tim, in a breath; "But," continued Kitty, "when the night comes again, I'll lade your honour, by a way I know, to the very house, an' into the house, more be token."

"Faith, we'll all be in Ross town afore the next night, Kitty—or what did we come here for?" said Tim.

"True, my lad! true! ay—before the sun is two hours over the hills!" he rushed from them to the door of the house. "Come! I'll live a day yet, and perhaps not in vain!—enjoyment—triumph—revenge—then, death the next instant, and I can laugh in his face in my last gasp!"

He broke into the house; he announced the morning light to the scarce sober leaders; he ran out from them, first to the front, and then to the back lawn, and shouted away the sleep from the yet slumbering multitude; and with the earliest blush of a lovely morning, all was stir and bustle, where but a moment previously all had been forgetfulness and silence.

CHAPTER XV.

The banners were quickly snatched up, and their bearers, waving them to and fro, loudly repeated the names of the parishes to which each belonged, as the shortest method of mustering their followers; and in broken groups the natives of different districts rushed to obey the summons. The principal leaders mounted their horses; amongst them the dingy sables of four priests appearing oddly contrasted with their martial weapons.

The person who had been appointed commander-in-chief, and who was a Protestant gentleman of considerable property in the country, and much deficient, by the way, in the mental endowments necessary for his new station, began, according to previous plans, to divide his forces for the attack, when Sir William Judkin observed a horseman, bearing a white handkerchief on a pole, prepare to set out towards the town. He guessed his purpose.

"You go with a flag of parley, Sir?"

"With a summons to surrender, Sir William; which, if they're wise, they'll listen to."

"I am with you, if you do not object."

"'Tis a mission of some danger; but your company is welcome, since you offer."

Sir William thanked this person, who seemed a man somewhat above the middle rank. A green riband round his hat, and another crossing his shoulder, bespoke a leader of importance; and a brace of pistols, and a sheathed sabre, most probably the spoils of conquest, were thrust into a strap that encircled his waist.

At a brisk pace they advanced to the town. They were within a quarter of a mile of one of the gates, and could see the soldiers drawn out before the barriers, as they had been stationed during the night, ready for encounter.

"Halt, and give the countersign!" cried a sentinel in advance.

"A flag to your general," answered the herald, waving his emblem of office. Almost before he heard the explosion that sent the bullet through his brain, he fell dead from his saddle. Sir William fired in return, missed his man, and then galloped back, while a volley from the line that covered the gate followed his retreat; and as he rode up to Corbet-hill House, he could see that many balls which had missed and passed him, had made corses among the stragglers at the bottom of the eminence.

"Where's my masther, Sir?" cried a strippling of sixteen, catching at his bridle as he rode on: "where's Mr. Furlong, that went wid the flag?"

"Shot, my man!" and Sir William broke from him, but not before he heard—

"Why, then, may the Orange conquer us! bud I'll have the best blood among 'em for my masther's;" and the lad, peering at the flint of his pistol, mingled with the crowd.

It had been loosely planned by the leaders, while inspired by the libations of the preceding night, that their force should be divided into three bodies, destined to assault Ross, simultaneously, at three distinct points. But the attempt to carry this resolution into effect was attended with no little difficulty. They were, in truth, but the heads of a mob, yet unreduced to any thing like order, yet unconscious of good to be derived from previous arrangement, and who could form no idea of attack, save that inspired by wild impulse, and obeyed by one furious rush upon their foes. When, therefore, the captains spoke of precaution, and of a plan, they were only understood to be actuated by doubts of success as to the issue of a bold onset; and a vague notion of danger, already apprehended, began to pervade the assemblage.

The leaders themselves, mostly pushed into reputation and ascendancy by the personal prowess that urged them to head their followers through the thickest danger, and otherwise unfitted for command, proved as incompetent to execute their purpose, as did the rude force to understand it. A necessity for a divided yet

regular attack had been half-impressed on their minds, but they came to their preparatory task without reflection, and consequently could not apply themselves to arranging, in detail, the crude materials which were to be directed to their object.

When Sir William Judkin approached the position he had just left, the attempted preparations for the coming fight produced therefore such a scene of tumult, as already boded the impracticability of acting upon any cool plan. The commanders vociferated their orders often different to one and the same band; or cursed, or imprecated, or used violence to enforce them; the men as loudly exhorted each other, or rejected the authority which enjoined movements they could not comprehend, or were afraid to obey. Mingling and hustling, and dividing, and mingling again, the unmanageable mass waved over the brow of the eminence; while from the out-posts of their watchful enemies, well-directed volleys often brought down numbers amongst them, increasing, doubtless, the general disinclination to onset.

At this moment Sir William Judkin spurred into the middle of the concourse.

"All accommodation is at an end!" he shouted. "Your flag has been insulted!—your messenger shot by my side! down upon them, Wexford boys! if only for revenge!"

This appeal, seeming to advise the only mode of proceeding that could be relished, partially supplied the impulse that was wanted. The motive for immediate vengeance passed from tongue to tongue; a resolved and desperate shout followed; as if by general assent, a great number flung aside their coats, shoes, and stockings; and before the uncombined movement could be checked, seven thousand screaming men, those with fire-arms leading the van, while the blackheaded pikes bristled high over the heads of their main body, were rushing down the hill upon Ross.

Confusion and dismay ensued amongst the chief leaders, left behind, with nearly two-thirds of their whole force. All their plans were thus accidentally disarranged, and they stood powerless. The person called commander-in-chief exerted his voice to arrest the progress of the impetuous detachment; but he was not heeded. Some of his inferior officers, seeing it useless to remonstrate any longer, hastened down from Corbet-hill, to place themselves at the head of those whom they could not control. Others, still hoping to connect with the sudden diversion, a simultaneous attack upon the town, at three points, laboured to divide and separately to direct the great body around them. But their agitation and unassured manner quickly communicated itself to their followers; their want of judicious method added to the impression; and, at the ill-judged cry of "Down, Wexford men, or all is lost!" they were left almost alone on the height, the distracted mob flying with their backs to Ross: so that of twenty thousand, destined the

previous evening to seize upon the town, little more than eight thousand engaged in the affair.

And at the head of these eight thousand, driven onward by his seconders, rather leading them, did Sir William Judkin now spur his horse.

The mad shouts of the assailants sank into silent purpose, as they drove through the way leading to the verge of the descent, at the bottom of which Ross was situated. The advanced sentinels fled before them. They heard the gallop of horse coming on. They paused. Dragoons swept around a curve of the road, charging at a gallop. With a renewed yell the insurgents rushed to meet them. Fire-arms were discharged on both sides; numbers of the peasant force fell; but they pressed over the bodies of their companions, now showing a front of pikes. Again the dragoons fired, and then wheeled round, and rapidly retreated. Their foes quickened their tramp to a race.

The horsemen, in sweeping upon the town, dispirited, by their flight, the advanced body of infantry at the gate, who faced about, not waiting the assailants. Sir William Judkin saw his men come close upon the entrenched and barricaded entrance. Here cannon opened upon them, each shot making a path through the thickly-wedged mass, and promising to protect the dragoons who, hard pressed by barefooted foes, almost as fleet as the beasts they bestrode, and not able to cross the deep trench before them, wheeled to the right, down a narrow way, leading into the centre of the suburb before described as stretching from the fair gate up the heights over the town.

"Surround them in the *Boreen-na-slaunagh!*" shouted Sir William;—and being answered by a fierce cry, he led part of his adherents over a fence near at hand, and was followed at a speed that put his horse to his mettle.

The result answered his expectations. He and his detachment were on the narrow road before the dragoons; the remaining force pressed the horsemen in the rear.

"Now, my boys, no quarter! some of them are Talbot's hangmen!"

His advice was scarcely necessary. The dragoons could but once draw their triggers, when, except two, who broke in desperation through the throng, and galloped, at peril of their necks, down almost a precipice into the town, they were piked to death in a few minutes. Even their horses, as if identified with themselves, shared the hate, the rage, and the deadly thrusts which so quickly dispatched the riders. And while still engaged in their work of slaughter, the exulting yells of the victors rang with ominous effect through the town below.

"To the Three-bullet-gate, my gallant boys!" again cheered their young leader, and again an answering shout prefaced their

return to that important point: and they bounded upward with unslackened speed.

The cannon did not now roar at them, as a second time they thronged to its mouth. An officer, visibly of rank,—a commander of title, indeed,—appeared on horseback between them and the trench, waving his sword in token of parley. The insurgent body suddenly halted close to him.

"What is it you seek, my lads?" he began, and while he spoke, a bare-legged boy advanced closer than the others, as if stupidly attending to his address: "why do you thus foolishly oppose the King's forces? state your demands to me, and if a compromise can be effected, we will avoid the shedding of blood—"

Ere the last words were wafted from his lips, the stripling's aspect changed into the fierce wildness of the tiger's, as, snatching a pistol from his bosom, he shot the noble mediator through the heart, who instantly tumbled into the trench.

"Now, masther, there's a life for your life!" cried the young assassin, bounding high in ecstacy: "it wasn't to see you killed widout a life for id, that you brought me up undher your roof."

The field-pieces on the trench flashed and bellowed; the infantry drawn up behind it sent in their accompanying volleys; guns from the hill-side within the town supported both; and numbers of the insurgent throngs paid forfeit for the much-regretted (and still-regretted) life thus treacherously taken.

But the maddened assailants, mounting upon the heaps of slain which rapidly filled the trench, only redoubled their efforts to possess the gate. They were repulsed three times, steadily, and with great loss. A fourth time had the gunners loaded to sweep back a fourth assault, and their matches were approaching the guns, when from a wall to the right of the gate, and to which the trench ran, jumped a band of almost naked men, who to gain this point had taken an unobserved circuit. Before they could be aware of their danger, the cannoneers lay stretched under their carriages; and in another instant the guns were wheeled round and discharged upon their own infantry. At the same time, the main force of the insurgents easily crossed the trench, over the dead bodies that filled it, and, pike in hand, followed up the unexpected salute by a charge. Their fury, their numbers, and their fearful weapon, could not be resisted; and as the retreating soldiers descended the steep street into the middle of the town, the cannon was once more discharged upon them. The screaming foe sprang down in pursuit, sometimes checked by a murderous volley sent up from the infantry, who would momentarily pause and face round to give it; sometimes by the bayonet, which, with little chance of success clashed against the pike.

Besides those who entered by the gate, numbers came pouring down the hilly suburb and streets that faced the river; and when-

ever a musket flashed, they sprang to its muzzle, still shouting at death, and overwhelming opposition. They gained the outskirts of the lower and principal part of the town, where stood the market-house, a building with open arches below, and with public-rooms overhead, surmounted by a cupola.

Here almost the whole remaining garrison had become concentrated; and here was the sturdiest struggle. Even as the assailants rushed down the street which led to this little citadel, volley after volley still thinned their ranks; at a closer approach, cannon again blasted showers of shot upon them from beneath the arches, and from every window overhead the glittering tubes of infantry well seconded the larger engines; while between each pause of the fire, horsemen charged against the rushing concourse. The contest gradually became astounding. In answer to the harsh and incessant explosions of musketry, and the bellowing of the guns, the insurgents sent back their hoarse yet tremendous shouts: over heaps and heaps of their own slain they continued to bound, always driving back the dragoons; and to eke out the din and the fury of the scene, the crackling and roar of burning dwellings, and the shivering of windows by ball, or by the exploding air within, soon began to be heard, and the smoke of conflagration mingled with that of the hot engagement.

And amid this scene was the fate of Eliza Hartley to be decided.

She stood in an open window of Mr. Jenning's house, near to the market-place, but out of range of the volleys thence sent forth, endeavouring to catch, through the clamour of human voices which added to the general roar and clang, one accent of one voice that it would have been joy to hear, and to select from amongst the dense phalanx of insurgents, the figure of one individual for whose safety her prayers fervently petitioned Heaven.

A horseman spurred his jaded horse up an unencumbered street towards her.

"It's he, my lady!" shouted Kitty Delouchery, who stood by her side; and the girl quickly descended to admit Sir William Judkin, while Eliza extended her arms towards her husband. She saw him halt, look up, brush his bloody hand across his forehead and eyes, as if to clear his vision, look up again, and then he took off his hat, and waved it.

"Hasten!" cried Eliza. "Beloved!" he shouted in reply, and spurred to the door.

"Oh, hasten, hasten!"—repeated Eliza, as another horseman, whom previously her anxious eye had caught, closed on Sir William, darting the rowels into his steed until, at each spring forward, the animal's hoofs struck sparkles from the pavement.

"Turn, rebel!—turn from that house!"—exclaimed the pursuer,

in the well-known tones of Talbot. His sabre was bared and raised, almost over his rival's head."

"My husband! spare my husband!" cried Eliza; but she was unheard amid the din around her, or, if heard, unheeded by the ears to which she addressed herself. Sir William wheeled about; and, distinct from every sound of strife, she caught his screaming accents.

"By the heavens, this is sweet! My love and my triumph together!"—

Eliza leaned from the window, unconscious of danger, for she saw but two persons in deadly conflict, where thousands were striking for each other's heart's-blood. The arms were stretched forward, and, at first, her hands remained apart, but suddenly she struck them together, her fingers entwined, her white lips parted, her rounded eyes seemed as if they would fly to the objects that fascinated them, and her unequal breath, previously kept in, escaped slowly, as if fearful to disturb her eager watchfulness.

Sir William was armed with a rude weapon; it had been a pike, but the handle had become shivered, leaving it no more than about four feet in length, of which the blade was nearly two. Holding this in his bridle-hand, he drew a pistol with his right, and fired. The ball whizzed harmlessly. He changed the fragment of a pike from one hand to the other, and raising it high, spurred against his watchful opponent. By adroitly wheeling round, Talbot scarce avoided the deadly thrust, while with the force of his onset, Sir William past him, losing his weapon. Then Eliza saw her dreaded enemy approach within a few feet of her defenceless husband, and deliberately aiming at his knee, indeed almost pressing the muzzle of the pistol to the joint, pulled the trigger. The ball seemed to have maimed the horse as well as the rider, for both tumbled on the street, and became entangled, until the plunging animal rolled over Sir William, apparently crushing him to death. Then came a shout more deafening than any that had preceded it; her failing eyes beheld a body of routed horse driven past the door of the house by a throng of half-naked men; they galloped over the prostrate Sir William, they made a momentary stand; they discharged their carbines; the insurgents closed with them; heaps of dead bodies, men and horses, arose above her husband and his steed; the discomfited dragoons again fled; the charging pikemen yelled and raced after them; Eliza gave a faint cry; the rush, and the shout, and the explosion faded from her sense; and she fell into Kitty Delouchery's arms.

The insurgents drove the main force of the garrison out of the town of Ross. Over the wooden-bridge that spans its broad river, horse, foot, and artillery rushed together, and ascending the hill at the opposite side, were lost to view. The long, winding street leading from the gateway where the attack had begun, was

strewed with slain, ten insurgents for one of the king's troops, making up the number of the slaughtered. Upon the height, over the town, springs a little stream of limpid water, falling in transparent spouts, at different intervals, from basin to basin, until it reaches the lower streets; and this constantly running streamlet was discoloured with blood. Yet were the insurgents victors; or at least, it was only needful for them to act upon the advantages already gained, in order really to command that name. The handful of infantry, and the few cannon which yet remained, rather out of necessity than as opponents, in the market-house, presented an easy conquest.

But the undisciplined and riotous mob, bellowing amid the carnage of their companions, broke into the houses, seized upon whatever liquor they could find, and in the fever of intoxication, forgot that they were yet exposed to a reverse of fortune.

An inhabitant of the town followed the retreating army, and informed its officers that their ferocious foes had already become changed into a powerless rabble. The officers returned to the height commanding the town to reconnoitre. They saw the flames of burning houses ascending at different points, but the flag of England yet fluttered over the barracks; and instead of the ferocious shout of wild carnage, the less frequent scream of drunkenness arose from the principal streets. At intervals, too, the discharge of artillery and musketry from the market-house, directed against some faint and reeling attack, told that Ross might yet be recovered.

The defeated force rallied. The militia regiment, whose Colonel had been killed by the revengeful stripling, thirsted for a renewed engagement; their spirit became diffused through every bosom; all descended towards the river; and horses, men, and cannon once more thundered over the wooden-bridge.

The conquerors were dispersed in all the confusion and riot of inebriety. As the drums beat, and the trumpets blew, and the rolling volleys again made havoc among them, some hastily snatched their arms; but numbers, unable to make the slightest opposition, fell easy and merited victims to the thrusting bayonet, the dragoon's sabre, or the trampling hoofs of his horse. Separate bands encountered detachments of the soldiers at every corner of the streets, and in every alley; and amid sudden shouts, and rush, and encounter, the contention was as desultory as it was bloody.

In a short time, all of the insurgents who could wield a weapon, forced their way to the end of the street, down which they had driven their opponents in the morning. Two squares of the market-house commanded them in this situation; additional cannon rattled to its arches; and from beneath the shivering building volleys of grape-shot still made roads through their diminished throngs, while upon all sides combined discharges of musketry

told with almost equal effect. Wherever, in the pauses between the explosions, horsemen charged through the openings thus cleared in the insurgent mass, the despairing men still evinced, however dangerous, courage, driving their assaulters pell-mell back upon the infantry and artillery, and following, while they dealt death around, to the very mouths of the guns, whence they were blown piecemeal along the streets, until the heaped dead made farther approach to the market-house difficult. Those who bore fire-arms loaded and fired while they retained a charge of powder and ball, and then handing their pieces to their women, received pikes in return, and sought desperately to continue the contest. But unable to come to close quarters, and after having stood repeated discharges of cannon, and of every kind of lesser engine, they at length retreated up the ascending street with a celerity too rapid for regular pursuit, leaving nearly a third of their body dead behind them, and thus abandoning the conquest they had sacrificed so much to achieve.

CHAPTER XVI.

Many were the scenes of terror in the streets of Ross after the departure of the furious foe; but of all such, two principally concern the story.

Upon the spot where Eliza had seen her husband fall, buried beneath his own plunging horse and a pile of slain, appeared a woman and a man, both busily employed in turning over the dead bodies.

"Here the young rascal lies!" said the man in a ruffianly tone; "bud we must get him from undher the horse."

"Is he dead?" asked the woman solemnly.

"The best o' the two is dead," she was answered; "the good horse is kilt outright, bud there's a gasp in him yet."

Whoever you are," Sir William Judkin freely cried, "you torture me;—hold! hold!" as they endeavoured to free him of the stiffened animal whose carcass lay across his thigh—"my arm is broken, and this limb is shattered."

"Hah!" said the woman, as if communing with herself—"gay and sonorous accents of days gone by; is it to this ye are

changed?" then addressing Sir William—"Do you know me?" she asked.

"Touch me not, fiend!" he screamed aloud.

"At last you are mine!" she resumed; "yes, mine; in my power, at my mercy, to deal with you as I like: this is no place or time for our last converse,—but there is a silent and a fit spot where we shall speak together, where none shall break in upon our dialogue, where no sound shall interrupt our words, and yet where we shall come to a reckoning before meet witnesses. Raise him," she said, addressing Bill Nale; "is your comrade at hand to assist you?"

"No, by the living farmer! God be wid you, poor Sam! one o' the greatest mistakes o' this day, however it come to pass, was to let the hemp that was growin' for you wait for a betther man, —bud no matther; there's one 'ill help me at the corner o' the next sthrect, instid o' him; one that, since he hard tell o' the thricks o' this youth, 'ud lend him any helpin' hand we may want."

"You mean John Delouchery?"

"Or a body very much like him."

"Come then," and she assisted with her own hands in bearing the now insensible Sir William to the spot where Shawn-a-Gow waited for them; and then all gained the height above the town with their nearly lifeless burden, entered the church-yard, and descended to the dripping vaults beneath the ruined monastery.

"Lay him here," said the woman—"here, amid the reliques of the dead and gone, let him commune in solitude with these rattling bones; at the proper time ye know wither he is to be conveyed; meanwhile, I have something to do," and again she bent her steps towards the lower town.

As she strode through the streets leading from Three-bullet-gate to the market-house, a number of yeoman-cavalry were galloping down its steep descent, after a last discomfited charge upon the retreating insurgents. The men, many of them wounded, appeared in much disorder, and their officers' voices were heard high in reproach. The woman paused an instant, glanced observantly and eagerly from one to another of the officers, and then darted like an arrow through the horses, and seized Captain Talbot's bridle.

"Will you save Eliza Hartley from destruction?" she asked, looking up into his haggard face.

"How? where—what do you mean?"

"Look!" she answered, pointing to Mr. Jennings's house, which was in flames; "they have left her in it alone—Shawn-a-Gow forced off his daughter from the door—all fled for safety, and she was forgotten: you must brave fire and smoke to save her—you may perish with her, but there *is* a chance yet—a slight one—

and you, and only you will take that chance for Eliza Hartley's sake!"

"Two of you follow me," said Talbot, speaking to the men by his side; and he spurred over the dead and wounded, staining the fetlocks of his horse with blood. The woman quickened her pace to keep him in view. Flames were bursting through the lower windows, and through the door of Mr. Jennings' house, throwing a glare even into the broad day; the crackle of wood within told the farther progress of the fierce element, and smoke which rushed from the shivering windows of the first story, warned the spectators that through them also it would soon shoot forth.

At the garret-window, built upon the unparapeted roof, stood Eliza Hartley, indistinctly seen, even in her high situation, amid the curling smoke. Her piercing shrieks sounded the agony o her despair; the prospect of a shocking death, distinctly beheld in its terrible advances, inspired even her wretched heart with the instinct for life. There was no time for deliberation. Talbot, aided by his daring companions, quickly disencumbered himself of his accoutrements, jacket and boots, and then stood upon his saddle, under one of the windows of the first story, endeavouring to balance his agitated limbs for a bound. The female held the bridle of his trembling steed, and covered his eyes with the adventurer's jacket, that he might not see the rushing flames which now almost enveloped him. After a few seconds, Talbot stood firmly on the animal's back, his eyes fixed on the window-stool. He couched himself, darted upward, grasped his object, stood upon it; his scorched and terrified horse broke away, and galloped down the street. An instant he paused for breath, perhaps for resolution, as he looked into the room within; then he dashed through the window, which was shut down, shattering its frame and remaining glass, disappeared, and, simultaneously, a red column burst out from the opening thus made. Those below looked on in breathless silence. They were startled by a crash, evidently caused by the falling in of the floor of the apartment he had just entered.

"Lost together!" exclaimed the woman who had urged him to this desperate attempt. The men of his corps, and a crowd of other persons, groaned an assent to her words. But looking up to the garret where Eliza had first appeared, as her renewed shrieks challenged their attention, they saw his blackened figure supporting what seemed now to be the lifeless body of our heroine, for her head drooped over his shoulder, and her arms swung without voluntary action. He spoke, he roared, but little more than the movement of his lips and the working of his features could be caught amid the over-mastering roar of the flames. He waved his disengaged arm violently, but the yeomen did not un-

derstand his gestures. The female, however, seemed to have done so, for she disappeared from amongst them.

Flashes began to quiver in the room at the backs of Talbot and Eliza, and accumulating volumes of smoke almost hid them from view. The men, in loud and afflicted accents, anticipated every instant the falling in of the second and only remaining floor of the house. They shouted loud, but as much in despair as in applause, when they saw him, still clasping Eliza, issue from the window, and stand on the slates at its edge, while one hand clung to its pointed top. Some had run for a ladder, as the only means of rescue that occurred to them; others screamed for those to return with it.

"Five minutes more, and they're gone!" said one of the yeomen —"but look there—see the woman coming out through the sky-light on the next roof! an' she's making way to them!—that's brave, that's brave!"

"She's a fearless woman!" said another—"I'd face the Croppies' pikes once again, sooner than venture along them slates."

The roof of the adjoining house had not, indeed, any more than Mr. Jennings's, a protecting parapet; yet along its smooth slope the female continued to direct her course. A rope, secured or held tight by some persons within the sky-light, was passed round her body, and she held in her hand some sharp-edged instrument, with which she broke away the slates to make resting-places for her feet previous to each step she took.

She gained the spot where the swarth figure of Talbot yet remained, barely visible. The hushed spectators saw her admonish him by gestures to hold her skirts with the hand that clung to the last window-top of the nearly consumed house. Thick clouds of smoke wrapped both. When for an instant it was wafted aside, she and he appeared half-way across the adjacent roof, the woman leading, propped upon her sharp instrument, at every cautious and lengthened step; Talbot, as she had exhorted him to do, guiding himself by touching her garments, while the senseless Eliza still rested on his right shoulder; and it was evident that judicious hands within gradually drew the rope tight, as the female, to whose body it was attached, came near and nearer to them, so as to afford her additional support and confidence on her perilous return to the open skylight.

Those below, silent and aghast, thrilled to see her and Talbot's progress over the shelving and slippery surface, from which one false step had hurled all to certain death. Their feelings underwent strong excitement between joy at the escape from the flames, fear of the peril yet unpassed, and admiration of the courage and presence of mind of Talbot and his ally. Sometimes loose slates fell into the street, and they were ready to cry out in terror and lamentation, but still the bold adventurers appeared safe, and still

the crowd was silent. In a few seconds all suspense ended. The woman gained the opening in the roof, disappeared through it, reached out her arms to relieve Talbot of his burden, received the unconscious Eliza, and then Talbot plunged after both, and the breathless pause below was broken by a heart-stirring cheer.

They were shortly in the lower part of the house, which already had begun to catch fire.

"You have shown yourself a brave and a bold man," said the woman, addressing her companion, while he staggered and stared around him, now but half conscious of what had occurred.

"Heavenly powers! is she safe? have we indeed snatched her from the dreadful flames?—where are we?—how came I here?—*is* she saved?—where is she?"

"In your arms," said the female.

With a faint cry of joy he bent his eyes on Eliza's pallid face.

"Fear not," resumed his companion, as she saw him start, "'tis but a swoon."

He dropped on his knees. "Almighty Providence! the thanks and the praise to Thee! Thy hand alone could have guided us!" He drooped his head over his mistress's bosom, and wept aloud.

When Eliza regained imperfect sense, she became half aware that she sat in a carriage supported by a woman, but by whom she did not raise her head nor open her lips to ask. The different horrors she had that day experienced, vaguely blended together in her mind, kept her stunned and silent. The vehicle proceeded towards its destination, and she would not even inquire whither it bore her, for in truth she cared not whither. It reached, without her observation, the house, near to Dunbrody, from which, by Nanny's agency, she had so lately escaped. She was helped out of it, and accompanied by her fellow-traveller, and guided by Mrs. Nelly, and bowed to by Robert as she went along, gained her former chamber, still unconscious of her situation. A bed appeared before her and she sank on it.

Mrs. Nelly's obsequious lamentations filled her ears, and gradually produced recollection. She raised herself, looked around, recognised the kneeling attendant, and in the person of the woman by her side, the bearer of the first letter from her father, and with a shriek she swooned again.

After this, her mind had dim glimpses of alternate consciousness and insensibility; and when at length, in consequence of generous restoratives, she could take a renewed and steady glance around, the shades of evening were in her chamber, and surrounded by them, where they deepened under a fold of the bed-furniture, sat the strange woman, silent and motionless, the hood of her dark cloak drawn over her features. Mrs. Nelly was no longer visible.

"Impostor! deceitful creature! leave me!" were the first words which, in a return of sickening sensations, Eliza uttered.

"How am I an impostor?" asked the female in her former controlled voice.

"How! knew you not the pretended letter you brought me was a forgery?"

"I knew, and I *know*, it was *not* a forgery!"

"And knew you not that my father,—oh merciful Heaven! leave me,—I can speak no farther with you."

"You must speak farther with me. I guess what you would utter. You would tell me that upon the night of your escape from the inn, I conducted you to another impostor, and not to your father."

Eliza hiding her face, only groaned her answer.

"And still you would err in telling me so. Upon that little bridge, your father indeed met you; and here, in this house, this night, he will himself confirm my story!"

"Gracious God! can I believe you? why should you deceive me again! What do you mean?—my father alive, coming hither to-night! how can that be? oh, how, indeed!—cruel, torturing woman! is not the fact of his death well known to the world, since that very night?"

"Well, believed by the world; yet he lives. A friendly hand, allowing his enemies to deem him led to his fate, saved her father for Eliza Hartley."

"Ay? so your letter said—but how saved him?"

"In order to be left uncontrolled arbiter of his life or death—indeed, almost to cause himself to be appointed Sir Thomas's executioner—that friend assumed the utmost appearance of party zeal and bigotry against your father, excluded his witnesses, denied yourself access to his dungeon, was accordingly appointed superintendent of the execution, and thus, with the assistance of one trusty follower, another condemned rebel, in the depth of night, and while the guards stood at a distance, mounted the ladder of the gallows upon which your parent was doomed to suffer, and upon which, as you say, it is believed, he has suffered."

At parts of this statement Eliza started repeatedly; and when it was ended—"What!" she cried, in a tone of bitter mockery, "excluded witnesses—denied me access! who? who did this? who dare you assert did it?"

"Dare? Use no such words to me. Henry Talbot was that friend."

"Wretch! false wretch!" laughed Eliza—"I guessed your hero. Ay, this is following up the insidious views of your forged letter, heaping lie upon lie!"

"Peace!" in turn cried her companion, rising, and using a tone different from her former subdued one, at which Eliza again start-

ed. "Peace, I say! and have a care how you insult me, Eliza Hartley: look better at me, first:" she dropped her cloak, and appeared in a gown of black silk, deeply edged and flounced with crape; her face was emaciated and pale as death, and her black locks, uncurled, and indeed wholly undressed, hung thickly by each cheek—"Do you not remember me, Eliza?" she continued, advancing to the bed, stooping over Eliza, till their eyes met, and now speaking in a cadence of heart-broken and despairing wretchedness.

Eliza half-breathed the name of which the faded and altered features only doubtfully reminded her.

"Yes," said Belinda St. John, "you look upon all that suffering and passion have left of your schoolfellow. And may I not take this innocent hand, and while in my own name I reassure you that your father lives, still hold it in friendship? 'twould be a balm."

Eliza, overpowered as well by thick-coming convictions, as by the sight of the miserable being before her, answered by clasping both the hands of her former bosom-friend, and bursting into tears.

"I am glad of that, Eliza; I am glad to see you weep, it will do you good; I wish I could shed tears, too; but they have not flowed since last I saw you. But no, I would not weep, if I could. It might soften my heart from its purpose. And I have that to do, and soon, which was never done with a weeping eye. The heart must be stern and stony, the eye must be dry and hot, else would the hand fail."

"Belinda!—oh, my poor Belinda!"—Eliza was again obliged to pause, giving way to a fresh burst: after some time she resumed,—"I cannot say, Belinda, whether your words surprise, or delight, or terrify me most; yes, now I believe that my beloved father can again be clasped to my heart; but—" and she stopped, shuddered, and spoke faintly—"but, if so, I must believe the whole of that terrible letter—"

"Yes; when I am here to vouch it also—did not your father promise you should receive a confirmation from my own lips?"

"Yes—no—he only said—"

"That Judkin's victim would visit you; I am that most wretched, most wronged, and yet unavenged woman!"

"And you and he had met before your coming to my father's house?" groaned Eliza, hiding her face.

Yes: it was of him I spoke to you in your father's house. Yes; long before that we had met, although then he had not inflicted the last injury. And it was to place myself in his way I came to Hartley Court, and remained in it, and, at the dead hour of night, often left it to wander about his mansion, hoping to meet him by chance; for I feared that, hearing of my visit to you, he but feigned absence from home, and in this manner I expected to con-

front and confound him. But I truly ascertained that he was in Waterford, on business; and upon the very night when I received my intelligence, thither I went, and—you have read your father's letter—we met at last.

"Eliza, by the written communication soliciting advice upon the waving state of your heart, I at first learned the treachery of our common deceiver; and I will own that, while brooding over it, without attempting to answer it, my blood boiled against you, and my passion urged some dreadful punishment for the siren who had robbed me of happiness—of hope. Yet do not now shrink from me. It was but the dark impulse of a moment, soon forgotten in recollections of your unconsciousness of injury, and of our early and sweet friendship—nay, in pity for you, left at the mercy of a man so merciless. And, believe me, Eliza Hartley, that, through all I have since suffered and done, the sense of my own maddening injuries scarce weighed with me more than did an ardent desire for your preservation. Let that truth become fixed in your mind—in your heart. I strongly wish you to feel convinced of the service I have rendered you. This is the last time we can ever converse together; the hour is at hand which may end my life, while it rights my wrongs—I do not think I can outlive it—I do not think I ought; and I hope to part from you as friends should part. For after all it is a wretched, a desolate fate to plunge into the grave without one eye left behind to shed a tear upon its eternal cover. Tell me, therefore, in your gentle voice, and press my hand while you tell it, that when looking down upon my wreck you will compassionate, and feel grateful to, the hopeless Belinda St. John—to her, who in working out her own dread doom, saved her friend from despair and pollution."

Eliza, again deeply affected, replied to this appeal in such a manner as gave evident relief to the unhappy woman. "And oh! Belinda," she continued—"why was I not made acquainted with the name of your undoer at the time, when, in consequence of such information, the greater portion of what we have both since suffered might have been prevented?"

"You mean, when I saw you at Hartley Court? I will candidly answer your question. Fallacious hope and my strong pride suggested that, although diverted from his former views by passing admiration of your sparkling charms, he might still be won back by endearment, or else by determined remonstrance, at least to do me the poor justice I claimed at his hands—in fact, to become my protector—my husband—the—the"—Belinda's voice sank into a grating hollowness—"the legal father of my unborn infant. And calculating upon this result, I felt the necessity, for all our sakes, of avoiding to expose him, to humiliate myself, and to sow discord between Eliza Hartley and her earliest friend. For even you, Eliza, ought not to have been made capable of recognising, in the

husband of Belinda St. John, the man who, to your smiles, sacrificed—no matter for how short an interval of forgetfulness, *her* smiles and her sole earthly views of felicity; or, supposing you put in possession of the fact, and supposing him returned to his feelings for me, it would thenceforward be impossible that you and I could ever meet, even as common acquaintances. No; pride and prudence equally ensured my silence at the time you speak of; and I went to the utmost limit of the lengths I should have gone, in vaguely alluding to my recent disappointments, and in repeatedly warning you to remain faithful to the first inclinations of your heart. And now, Eliza, I must in turn say, that if you had but profited by my warning, then indeed much had been spared to us both; much to your father, and much to the most deserving person whom—before your meeting with the murderer of my mother and my baby—you indirectly led to reckon upon your favour, and with whom you, my friend, may yet be happy; while for me there is not a hope on earth but—first—quick and fierce revenge—and then the repose of the long sleep."

In these last words there was much to startle Eliza from her hitherto single and entire reliance upon all Belinda's assertions. The notion of regarding Talbot in a favourable light had never possessed her, even while she irresistibly yielded full credit to her gloomy visiter, and although could she have paused to reason, conclusions of his honesty and worthiness ought to have gone hand-in-hand with that trusting state of mind. Now it suddenly occurred as strange and questionable that Belinda should so positively become his advocate; and the rapid doubt soon assumed a more distinct shape—"What! could he and Belinda be in league together? he, to secure his views on Eliza—she yet to secure the homage of Sir William Judkin?—could the excited passions of both have led them to combine in a story of Sir William's baseness, which, if credited by her, might, assisted by those favourable representations of Talbot, ensure their common hopes?" And again, while Eliza struck her hands together at the returning prospect, again came the blessed thought that Sir William was guiltless of the hideous crimes charged upon him—guiltless of all but a transfer of his love from a woman whose vehement and wild character, when once known, it seemed but natural he should dislike. Her father's death, too! Could Eliza credit the wild tale of its having been prevented? And he came not!—night deepened, and he came not. If free to visit her, as was pretended, would her anxious parent dally so long? Then indeed what was Sir William's present fate? here appeared a discrepancy in Belinda's aroused feelings towards him, compared with some of her former assertions.

"You told me, Belinda," said Eliza, suddenly looking up, and fixing her visiter's glance,—"you told me, upon the night I ac-

companied you to meet my father, that you returned into Enniscorthy to free Sir William also from prison?"

"Yes; and I did free him."

"Why? if your only present views towards him are those of vengeance, why need you—why should you have done so? He was in the hands of those who, upon your evidence, well supported, would have punished him as he merited."

"I know not, what means your changed manner, Eliza; but it is necessary that I should answer you?—that I should repeat the nature of the oath I swore, anew, with my dying mother, over the disfigured corse of my child? Talbot thought as you think, and urged me to leave him to the laws of the land; but while I seemed to comply, I snatched him from their probable sentence to dispose him for my own doom and punishment. At the moment of his deliverance, he again sought to become my murderer, and breaking from me, and from the lure which I hoped would keep him by my side, at least for a short distance, avoided the hands which lay in wait to compel him to my will."

"Have you seen him since, Belinda?"

"I have, and at the moment he was about to perpetrate another murder, which you would have lived to weep for; and a second time I hoped to make him my manacled captive, and a second time he escaped me.

"Belinda, all this may be true;—hear me! nor be surprised at the first show of a vehemence akin to your own. You say that your friend has saved my father; but if so, was it not from a fate which he first took the basest or the most unaccountable measures to ensure? Had Talbot permitted the witnesses to appear upon my father's trial—"

"The witnesses!" interrupted Belinda, scoffingly; "if upon that day an angel had come down to arraign the perjury brought against your father, his judges might have been moved; but no other testimony would have moved them, and this Talbot knew, as indeed any one of observation must have known; so that while his refusal to admit Sir Thomas's servants had no influence upon the result of the trial, the ostentatious zeal in which he repulsed them had much influence in inducing the order which left the execution of his revered friend in his own hands."

"He knew that Nale was a perjurer—knew it from the man himself—why not step forward and declare so?"

"Spare me, Eliza Hartley, spare an unhappy woman doomed to ignominy and wretchedness in every connexion of life, yet I will still answer you. In not attempting this, Talbot was governed by more than one motive. When he learned, secretly as it had been arranged, that you were indeed to become the nominal wife of the blackest-hearted man that ever wore a beautiful form, your your old friend could only meet the exigency, by acting on Nale's

depositions and Whaley's warrant; afterwards, it appeared but a chance that his accusation of my miserable parent would be effective, and in that case, Talbot himself becoming an object of suspicion, your father was really lost to you; and, Eliza, respect Talbot for an additional motive—do so, that is, if you have any feeling left for Belinda—he was willing to screen, at my kneeling request, the degraded being to whom I owe my accurst existence.

Eliza, evincing the natural tenacity with which, while there is a doubt to substitute a reason, the heart will cling to its long indulged prepossessions in favour of an esteemed object, still remained wavering, and the black brow of Belinda St. John told that she read her thoughts in her manner.

"Sir William yet lives?" asked Eliza, spiritedly and expressively.

"He does—but neither for you nor for me."

"Saved, then, from his perilous situation in the streets of Ross?"

"Ay, carefully saved."

"Thank God!" Eliza briskly arose.

"Hah! and you indeed doubt the truth of anything I have told you?"

"I do!" answered Eliza, carried away by her sudden energy, never before assumed in Belinda's presence—"I do!—and nothing but his own admissions, or a repetition of your charges to his face, and his tacit acquiescence under them, shall make me discard my doubt.

"Come, then!" cried Belinda, exhibiting to excess the impetuosity that in her father's house had terrified Eliza,—"Come, then, and you shall have the proof you demand. I did not intend to expose you to a scene that must harrow your weak nature, perhaps kill you—a scene, that I alone, of all woman-kind, have nerve—because I have cause, to encounter. But I see that to vindicate myself, and ensure your future quiet—if, as I premised, you survive it—it is now necessary you should listen, ay, and look on. Follow me,—dare you follow?"

"Whither would you lead me!" demanded Eliza, impressively but resolutely.

"Into the presence of William Judkin."

"Swear to that!"

"I swear it by Him who is to judge me for all I shall do, by all that has been done upon me!"

"Lead the way, then!" and in something like her own frenzy of manner, Eliza trod in the quick steps of Belinda.

CHAPTER XVII.

A PERSON startled out of sleep, will suddenly rush to grapple, as it were, with the uncomprehended sound that has scared away his slumbers, his limbs and body vehemently active, while his mind is yet incapable of watching their motions. There are perfectly waking moments, too, though not often encountered in life, when, urged by overpowering excitement, we yield to an undefined, wild impulse, as little understood and unweighed as that of the half-aroused sleeper, and hurry to grasp at some vague object, with all the ardour of unreasoning desire. And under such an impetus, Eliza followed what, if she had reasoned, ought to have appeared to her, the very doubtful guidance of Belinda St. John. Prompt as was her action, she could not, indeed, have accounted satisfactorily for it. Her continued doubts did not really arise from close consideration of the case before her;—in fact, she wished to doubt, rather than doubted; and perhaps, were her heart analysed at the instant, a desperate resolution to attain the certainty which must go near to destroy her, and not a buoyant hope of any contrary demonstration, inspired her, as she hastened to see realised her conductor's promise of an immediate interview with Sir William Judkin.

They descended to the hall.

"This lady returns shortly," said Belinda, in a commanding tone to Mistress Nelly and Robert, who, notwithstanding their continued civilities, seemed disposed to refuse egress: but to this brief explanation, if so it might be called, they only bowed and curtsied anew, and allowed both the ladies to pass out instantly.

Eliza and Belinda gained the avenue, side by side, walking quickly over the dancing patches of white light which the moon shed through the interstices of the trees and of their foliage. They passed the outward gate, and Belinda seemed to pace towards the ruins of Dunbrody Abbey, which, on its gentle elevation, not far distant, was partly silvered by the unclouded luminary, partly wrapped in impenetrable shadow, while a vivid inversion of the whole effect appeared in the broad, smooth water beneath.

Suddenly, a chilling fancy seized upon Eliza. The mysterious view of the ruin, the scenery of its crumbled walls and nameless graves, became connected with Belinda's wild and dark character,

and with the thought of probable injury intended to herself. She had before now suspected her wretched companion to be of unsound mind; nay, allowing her claims to sanity, Eliza did not distinctly infer from their late conversation, that Belinda, all her uncurbed passions and vehemence brought into account, might mean her well; and just in such a place, and at such an hour, either madness or hatred might easily and fitly indulge a fearful paroxysm. Arrested by these imaginations, she abruptly stood still.

"Do you falter in your resolution?" questioned Belinda, at her side, after having for a moment attentively regarded her.

"Whither, indeed, would you guide me?" Eliza betrayed the alarm she felt.

"To yonder ruins."

"Why?—Did you not say we were to meet Sir William Judkin?"

"And there you are to meet him."

"In that frightful place?"

"Yes—it is the fittest for the interview."

"I will not go with you; I will rather return to the house I have left, and under its roof await my doom as best I may."

"It is not now a matter of choice with you, your accompanying me, or your turning back; after what has occurred, your childish, petty terrors are not to be considered: you must come with me, Eliza."

"Must! My God! for what purpose?"

"For your own—for the indulgence of a wish you have yourself expressed:—hasten, the time presses."

"You would not force me, Belinda?"

"I *would* not; yet *must*, if 'tis necessary: as I have said, I did not intend to expose you to the scene you are doomed to witness; but you defied and dared me, and now I *will* compel you to observe it;—nay, long, long ago, I cautioned you against all the consequences of your indulging a wayward fancy; but you laughed at my counsel, and braved them all, like a self-willed girl,—face one of them now like a woman."

"Pity me, Belinda—allow me to return to the house!"

"Pity?—what is pity? I, at least, never found out the quality in my kind, and therefore could not acquire it for myself: at all events, 'tis a weakly feeling, unsuited to the necessities of this occasion. Come! we are to be avenged together! you shall see, or partly see, the striking of the blow. I will seat you on a grave, and you and the viewless dead, if such there be, must answer to God and man that Belinda kept her oath; onward and judge for yourself!" and she put her arm through Eliza's.

"Help! help!" screamed Eliza, breaking from her, and flying precipitately. But Belinda pursued, and soon seized her hand.

"Do not thwart me!" she cried in a deep startling tone; "hitherto, I have dealt magnanimously by you; your insidious blandishments seduced from me, and made a villain of the man who was god-like when I first met him, and my worshipper, as I was his: to you I owe it that he, for whose lightest pleasure I would have poured out my heart's-blood, raised his hand against my life, and killed my baby, while it quickened beneath my bosom;—to you I owe it that, to-night, I am motherless, childless, friendless, houseless—my cheeks withered and hollow, and my heart a rock;—to you I owe all this, and more than this; and yet, to the present hour, I have respected our school-girl friendship; to the present hour I have curbed the jealous rage that often boiled to strike you to my feet;—with every cause that woman can have for detestation, I have shown myself your friend: but vex me no farther, I warn you; in the present hour of trial, cross me not; else I may forget our young and innocent days—forget that you are Eliza Hartley!"

"If you mean me kindly," said Eliza, imploringly, "of what use can my presence be, in the coming depths of night, in yonder dreadful place?"

"If I mean you kindly? Do you still doubt me? See—if I wished to do you evil, I could do it where we stand—see—I am prepared for all deadly purposes;" the moon's beam glittered on a blade which she snatched from her bosom; "but no," she put it up, in a calmer mood, or at least while she spoke in a calmer accent; "this steel is differently destined—onward, therefore, and fear not."

She now flung her bony arm, which desperation seemed to have nerved to masculine strength, around Eliza's shrinking form, and hurried her along.

Eliza really feared to give farther opposition; her guide had threatened her in not very doubtful words; and so, shuddering and almost fainting, she allowed Belinda to direct, almost to originate her motion. The avenue of Talbot's house entered upon the high road, and along this they for some distance held their course. They then came to a rude bridge constructed over one of those deep and abrupt hollows, locally called *pils*, up which, at high-water, the tide flows in-land, in a body so considerable as to float boats of burden, while at the sea's ebb, its loomy banks enclose but a shallow rill. They crossed the insecure bridge, and after some continued progress, gained the green ascent upon which stood the lonely and extensive ruins of Dunbrody.

Since their last conversation, to this point, no word was spoken, and still both remained silent. Eliza observed that Belinda did not, as she had expected she would have done, strike upward, so as directly to approach the decayed monastery, but obliquely and partially ascended the little elevation, keeping rather near to the

water. After some rapid walking, she stopped suddenly, and gazed around her, muttering, "Not here! 'tis not quite the hour yet;" and again she strode forward.

While they had stood still, Eliza sent around a look of timid inquiry. To her left, and higher up, were the masses of ruins; a mitred square castle in their centre, white in the moonshine, which also streamed here and there beneath the pointed arches of the roofless aisles; and the broad shade, that at a greater distance presented only blanks of unbroken darkness, now allowed the eye to catch through it, indistinct, projecting forms, or blind recesses, or shapes still more vague, which sometimes seemed to move and wave beneath her unsteady glance, as if the spirits of the ancient masters of the pile were lurking within the shadowed fragments of its walls. But it was not in expectation of supernatural visitants that Eliza peered into the mysteries of the old building; and of such as she did expect to see, none met her eye.

She looked forth upon the prospect to her right-hand. The moon was reflected in the still sheet of water beneath the height, and gentle swells, silvered and sparkling, came at intervals to break, scarce with a sound, at its feet. At one bank, a wooded height very distant, rose above the river; at the other, and much nearer to her, swept down a point of land, round which the waters curved. Still no human figure met her view. The soft murmur of the approaching tide was soothing, not terrific; and the whole scene was as beautiful as lonely.

But her conductor hurried her on to a spot even more lonely.

At the usual full tide, the eminence of Dunbrody was almost encompassed by water. In one direction round its base, the pil, before-mentioned, became the channel of the intruding element; in another, a stretch of flat land lay under inundation. When the tide ebbed, this last was a swamp, across which, in former times, the industrious monks of the monastery had constructed a causeway, though few traces of the work appear to have triumphed over the undermining floods of many generations. But the high Gothic archway, to which it led, in an outward wall of the building, yet exists; and contiguous to this relique, remote from the main pile, and overlooking the swamp, stood, upon the night of Eliza Hartley's visit to the spot, a little solitary ruin, not more than eight paces in length, and half the number in breadth. Rudely fashioned swellings of the turf, each the tenement of the humble dead of the district, crowded all around it. And humble, indeed, must have been the sleepers beneath; for no "storied urn," or graceful monument arose to record their former state, and to mock their unconscious ashes; not even a rudely-chiselled stone bore their names. The sole mementos that appeared were time-bleached fragments, taken from the adjacent ruin, and placed at the head of some little mounds, that, by their recollected pecu-

liarity of shape, the relations of the last-buried might know whither to convey a new comer, to mingle his dust with the kindred dust below. Nay, even these rude remembrances were very few; and the numerous and carelessly-formed graves crowded together in undulating and mingling confusion.

Within the crumbled walls that stood in the midst of this heap of dead, the tripping foot kicked up, at every step, from amongst the fallen stones, a human relic—so closely had they been piled over each other. The noisome hemlock, the prickly nettle, and the other tall and rank weeds that thrive on the cemetery's fat soil, mingled with the long grass that also flourishes in its nourishment. Two old ash-trees near at hand, and some chance-sown black-thorns, shaded this favourite place of sepulture; and alder trees, believed by the Irish peasantry to be the descendants of that upon which the traitor Judas Iscariot hanged himself in despair, gained, within and without, a luxuriant growth, and farther darkened the solitary spot with their loathsome-smelling foliage. One of them, indeed, once rooted in the end wall farthest from the entrance, grew in time to such an unwieldly bulk, as to fall across the space enclosed by the little ruin, dragging along with it the stones between which it had insidiously wrought its fibres; and there still lay the trunk of the spoliator, amid the rubbish it had made. All around the remaining portions of the interior, bushes and creeping brambles ran wild; and the ruin-loving ivy, that almost seems designed to exhibit the ever-green of inferior nature in contrast with the decay of man's idle works, and even with that of his perishable body, came from the outside over the top of the unroofed walls, hanging in gay festoons above the mingled relics of human labour and of human being.

"Stumbling amid the various inequalities of the ground, Belinda St. John and Eliza Hartley entered this little silent place of death and desolation. Often would Eliza have shrunk back, but her stern guide still controlled her motions.

"Sit down there," said Belinda,—"you tremble and need rest," and she pointed to the fallen trunk of the alder-tree.

"Why force me to this frightful spot?" inquired Eliza.

Belinda stood in the centre of the ruin, the moon shone upon her emaciated and ashy face, glistened over the coal-black hair that hung thickly adown her hollow cheeks, and touched with dimmed radiance the folds of her funeral dress; and thus standing, elevated to her full height, she seemed a figure fitly situated amidst the wreck around her.

"I have brought—forced you here," she answered, "that you may have your request, and that I may keep my promise; for here—ay, in this very churchyard,—you are to meet him who has played traitor to us both, and whom you will here admit as much before the moon goes down."

She stepped aside as she uttered these words; the ray of moonlight she had intercepted flowed forward and fell in a white shower into the far corner of the ruin. She started, fixed her eyes upon it, pointed impressively to it, and resumed.

"Look there; that is supernatural! It lights up the very spot where rest two of his victims—my broken-hearted mother and my little murdered innocent. Upon a dark night, my father paddled a small boat along the river below, and for cargo he had two corses in their coffins. Hither he bore them, and rooted among the stones to make them the only grave the place would allow. Some days after, as I am told, a few children playing amongst the graves, saw the end of a new coffin that had been but partially covered with the rubbish, and they ran away in terror. But it was even my request that the coffins should not be hidden deep. I anticipated this night, when I might be able to point out the names on the lids. And now I will prepare for his coming;" and proceeding to the corner she stooped down, catching the moonlight upon her back, as she hastily tumbled away the stones.

"Belinda," said Eliza, addressing her in feeble accents, while thus occupied,—"Belinda, you have solemnly promised more than once, that this night I should embrace my dear, dear father."

"And I promise it again. Had you treated all my promises and assertions so as to permit of my leaving you in the house, perhaps by this time you had been in his arms; now it is not unlikely that he will come to seek you here—but, hark!"

A loud shout from abroad broke the calm silence of the night; Belinda sprung up, strode to the narrow entrance, and clapping her hands together, gave an answering scream. The daws startled in the neighbouring ruin were heard clamorously croaking their alarm at the unusual and piercing sound; and as it echoed along the water, the stalking heron of the swamp responded in a harsh cry. Belinda hastily returned into the little building.

"'Tis he!" she whispered.

"Who? my father?"

"No, but the man you first wished to meet. They bear him hither."

She pointed her finger at the shivering Eliza, and slowly moving it up and down, continued to address her.

"And now attend—listen with all your soul before you interrupt us."

Steps and voices were heard approaching—they came nearer, Belinda drew back into the shade, and two men entered, bearing the seemingly lifeless body of a third person.

"Lay him there," said Belinda, speaking from her concealment, as she motioned towards the corner in which she had lately been occupied.

"He's upon the hand-gallop for a sthrange counthry, goin' to

lave Ireland for a while;" said Bill Nale, as he and Shawn-a-Gow rudely flung down the body into the nook, where it lay partially in the moonshine.

"Dying, you mean?" eagerly questioned Belinda of her wretched father, while she pressed forward,—"why is this?"

"None of our fault; the wounds he got in the battle done his business: hurry wid him, or he won't wait for you."

"Leave us together," said Belinda, and her ruffian parent moved to quit the ruin.

The moment they had began to speak, Shawn-a-Gow abruptly addressed Eliza by name, and thrusting a crumpled paper into her hand, while his eyes glared watchfully towards Nale, said, "The moonlight is sthrong enough, Miss Hartley, to let you run an eye over id, jest to tell me what it manes—I can't make out pin-writin' mysef, bud I know my own name when it's put down on paper, an' I think I saw id there: hurry, Miss—I wouldn't ax you, only there's life an' death in the business."

Thus appealed to, Eliza, notwithstanding the imminent interest of her own situation, read sufficient to allow her to answer—"Yes, your name is written here; and it seems a letter from some one who expected to find pikes at your house—take it—" turning away her head, and once more fixing her eyes on the corner, where the wounded man still lay motionless, while Belinda and her father continued their short dialogue.

"Look at the name at the bottom iv id," resumed Shawn, in a deep whisper—"isn't id the name o' Whaley?"

"Yes—leave me."

"An' isn't this name on the cover, William Nale, Miss?"

"It is, it is—pray disturb me no farther."

"I guessed as much," said the smith, talking to himself. Nale now made way out of the ruin, and he strode after him.

"There, Shawn," said his companion, when they had cleared the heap of graves abroad and descending towards the wooden bridge that crossed the *pil*—"there, he's brought to his long reckonin' at last."

"So he is," replied Shawn, "an' so it happened wid all decavers like him, sooner or later—don't you think so, Bill?"

"Yes, to be sure, Jack: what the duoul ails him?" he added in mutter, as he increased his speed down the eminence.

"Stop!" cried Shawn, seizing him by the shoulder, and standing still himself, he held Nale at arms length with one hand.

"Are you takin' lave o' your senses, Jack Delouchery? don't you know this is no place for stoppin' when we have to—"

"Don't spake either, only to what I'll ax you," interrupted his captor; "I found this afther you, on the road, this evenin'—what is id?"

"What is id?—why a letther, to be sure." Nale knew that the

smith could not decipher writing, and he therefore deemed himself not in much danger.

"I see it's a letther—who wrote id?"

"Who wrote id?—my poor crature iv a daughther, Jack—she wrote id, an' on the head o' this very business, too."

"That's a lie!" thundered the Gow, grasping him round the neck with both hands. Nale instantly lost the power of uttering a sound. Almost instinctively he groped in his bosom.

"It won't do!" again roared Shawn, detecting this movement; and then he took away one of his hands from the ruffian's throat, and made himself master of the pistol for which Nale had been searching.

"I'll build up your house for you," gasped the half-choaked Nale, in this momentary respite, "I'll—"

"An' you daare to be spakin'!" once more interrupted his executioner, as he dashed him against the ground; and instantly Shawn's knee was on his breast, his left-hand still grasping his neck, and his right presenting the pistol. The smith had pressed the muzzle to Nale's forehead, and his finger vibrated on the trigger; he checked himself, and withdrew the finger out of the guard.

"No, you're not desarvin' o' the shot"—he muttered, turning the weapon in his hand—"this way 'll pay you betther:" he raised the pistol, intending to strike Nale on the head with its heavy butt; again, however, he controlled himself, and hurling it far into the water beneath—"what am I dhramin' about?" he resumed, "it ought to be done no way bud this:" and raising the knee which had already crushed Nale's breast-bone, while he continued to kneel on the other, Shawn dragged up his writhing victim, and placing the back of his neck upon the tightened joint, a second time used both his hands.

"Tom, my boy, can you see us?" were the last words John Delouchery uttered over the object of his vengeance, while his savage eyes watched the upturned face. In the morning, Nale's crippled corse was found, not far from the *pil*. The smith might easily have hurled it into the deep gully which, about the time he had completed his act, was filled by the tide; but it seemed that he scorned to take any measures to hide what he had done.

We return to the ruin.

For about the space of time occupied by this scene, Belinda had remained stationary and silent over Sir William Judkin, and Eliza, not yet assured that it was the baronet, sat terrified and trembling on the trunk of the alder-tree. Belinda's voice, sounding as if she muttered to herself, at length reached our heroine's ear.

"Yes,—I had him brought here to kill him, but not as he now lies at my feet; not wounded, fainting, and already half-dead; I

expected to see him struggle against my uplifted hand, and he cannot even speak a word to avert the blow."

Her hollow accents, however, seemed to have recalled Sir William to some sense of his situation, for he stirred slightly, and in a feeble, broken tone, said—

"Where am I? into what savage hands have I fallen? Is there no kind fellow-creature within call?"

Eliza knew his voice at once, changed as it was, and forgetting every thing in a sudden swell of pity, started up with clasped hands, and was rushing to his side.

"Back on your peril!" cried Belinda, seizing her arm, and almost swinging her back—"yet, no; take his hand, if you can—'twill recall my resolution," she muttered, "take his hand, Eliza Hartley."

"Eliza Hartley!" screamed the dying man, "where is she?"

"I am close by you, William," answered Eliza.

"And do I touch your innocent hand? do I look upon your radiant face?"

A deep "hah!" escaped Belinda.

"How came we into this place, Eliza? is not it amongst the dead they have flung my shattered body? I think my head rests on a coffin—yes, and here I am brought to die—already I feel the pang at my heart:—Eliza, hearken to me—you have escaped a wretch—at least—" he continued, his mind wavering—"at least I thought so, though lately she appeared before me, but I admit it must have been my fancy—for her head was cleft, ay, and the deep water rolled over her," Eliza dropped his hand—"ah! now I am left alone, now you forsake me, Eliza, but had I lived, you would have proved my saving angel. For your gentle endearments I would have learned to love goodness. Belinda made me what I am—her fiery passion, her evil nature could neither reclaim nor attach me—"

"Rise, Eliza Hartley, or share his fate!" cried Belinda, stepping into the moon's ray, so that it fully illuminated her features.

Sir William ceased speaking, his eyes glazed, yet fixed itself on hers, he strove to rise upon his elbow while they regarded each other, but the attempt failed, only causing a cry of agony.

"Yes," said Belinda, "you are among the graves; yes, your head rests upon a coffin."

"And you!" he said; "you rise from the bottom of the deep river to meet me here."

"No; I escaped your hand. I live to meet you here."

"Then," he gasped, "wretch as I am! I will thank a merciful God for that!—I am not in reality a murderer!"

"You are, although Belinda St. John lives. Remember your brother assassin, Brown."

He uttered a piercing cry.

"And turn, if you can, one look upon the little coffin that supports your head; your murderous blows killed its inmate, ere yet the babe saw the light of day."

He endeavored to obey the command, and it seemed as if he vaguely comprehended the name on the lid; for after gazing some time upon it, he attempted to join his hands and raise his eyes, as if he would pray; then sinking under the effort, his chest and face came with a heavy sound against the coffin, and his spread arms hung at its sides.

"And now you begin to know why you are brought here," continued Belinda; "I swore over that infant's corse, hand-in-hand with my gasping mother, who stretches by its side, to kill you where you lie—see!" She drew out the long blade that Eliza had before seen in her hand.

"Hold, Belinda! do not make yourself a murderess!" shrieked Eliza, flinging herself once more by Sir William.

"Touch him not, siren!—brave me not! Rise up and hearken to me! you and he together!"

"Ah!" Eliza shrieked again, "he cannot hearken to more!—He is dead!—dead since he fell upon the coffin!"

"Dead?" repeated Belinda,—"dead, you say?" She knelt, put back his hair, and looked into his rigid features. "And so he is; dead, and as lowly laid as his poor victims. He was a bad and wretched man, Eliza, but beautiful as Lucifer. I am glad it happens thus. Had he come before me in all his vigorous strength, I think I could have kept my oath; but from the moment I saw his crushed and wounded body, and heard his low wailing voice, revenge left my heart; and when you cried out just now, I did not draw the steel to strike it through him, Eliza, but only that he might see proof of my former purpose. Well, he is gone—he, whom we both loved; and he has left one of us destroyed and avenged, and the other saved and warned. God be more merciful to him than we were to each other! He now stands for judgment, with you, my little baby, as his accuser." Belinda went on, laying one hand on the infant's coffin, while the other passed round the neck of the corse: "But do not, do not plead loudly against your wretched father! Even for my sake, my babe, kneel at his feet, and hold up your angel hands for him to the Great Judge. I think he has bribed your advocacy, after all;—Eliza, did he not seem to die praying over the relics of his child? and when his arms fell helplessly down, perhaps"—Belinda's voice broke and trembled—"perhaps he would have embraced the innocent clay. Nay, what is this The night-dew, or his tears, upon the lid? Oh God! oh God! and did he weep for us at last, my infant?" The unhappy woman found way for her own tears—the first shed since her idol had forsaken her; and pressing tightly the

arm that encircled the dead man's neck, she flung the other round the coffin, and fell convulsed upon it.

Eliza's anguish was also excessive, when it became checked by some one pronouncing her name outside the ruin. She sprang up, a man entered the little doorway, and she sank into her father's arms.

Recovering from the swoon that succeeded to her long struggling with terror, at last ended in joy, she found herself still supported by her father at the bottom of the eminence of Dunbrody.

"Yes, yes!—now I am not left in doubt!" she cried, gazing into his features—"and you are safe from future danger, my dearest father."

"Safe, as my letter promised you."

"And Talbot, then——"

"*Is* our common deliverer."

Eliza glanced around. Her father, understanding her look, resumed—

"But he presumes nothing upon his services, and therefore I came to seek him alone.

The good feeling shown by Talbot, in this instance, appealed to Eliza as much as did the sense of his extraordinary conduct.

"The wretched Belinda St. John!" she resumed, pointing towards the little ruin.

"An aged clergyman, a relation of her unhappy mother, whom we interested on her account, followed me to that horrible place and is now at her side; be tranquil, my Eliza, she shall be taken care of;—here comes my servant to attend you to the carriage."

THE storm of the insurrection blew away, but not so its effects. The people saw their error, and politicians hastened to grasp the advantages which that error placed under their hands. Blood continued to be shed some time after the total discomfiture of the peasant-force, but at last its flow was allowed to cease, and in the pause of terror, and with a face of conciliation, and a promise of advantages which have not yet been conceded, the Legislative Union,—that measure for which disaffection had been permitted to break out into actual disloyalty, nay, had often been goaded to the field,—the Legislative Union between England and Ireland, was accomplished.

About the same time we have to record another union, which proved happier than the national one. In the year 1800, Eliza Hartley became the bride of Henry Talbot, and not till then could she tutor her heart to return to her early affection for her first lover. But even at twenty years of age she was better qualified than at

eighteen she had been to discriminate between a passion founded on little else than the personal attractions of its object, and a more sincere tenderness, bestowed as the reward of gentle virtues, manly honour and courage, and, after all, a face and figure only second to the unfortunate Baronet's standard of beauty.

Of Belinda, from the night of Sir William's death, her old schoolfellow never heard. It was only known, or rather suspected, that the aged clergyman immediately conveyed her to a foreign country, where perhaps, in the seclusion of a convent, she learned to triumph at once over her passions and her sorrows. The mystery of her fate became impenetrable, from the circumstance of the sudden death of her old protector on the Continent, during, as was conjectured, his return, alone, to his own country.

Shawn-a-Gow fell in one of the unsuccessful battles afterwards fought by the insurgents.

His daughter Kitty and Timothy Reily became joint proprietors of a snug farm-house on the estate of Harry Talbot; and under its roof both sought to give quiet and peace to the poor maniac mother, who had witnessed the horrid death of her darling son.

As for Nanny the Knitter, she lived long to recount to wondering ears her adventures under the lime-tree and in the chest, and to knit dozens of pairs of little stockings for five or six pairs of little feet appertaining to the persons of as many curly-headed prattlers, all bearing the name of Talbot. Moreover, the population of her country had been thinned during the insurrection, and a consequent necessity arising for repairing the want, Nanny became very brisk, during many subsequent years, in the service of Hymen.

Father Rourke was hanged upon the bridge of Wexford; the weight of his colossal body having broken the rope, however, before Saunders Smily saw him pending to his heart's content.

THE END.

E. L. CAREY & A. HART

WILL SHORTLY PUBLISH

PERICLES OF ASPASIA.

BY WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

In 2 vols.

BEAUTIFULLY PRINTED ON FINE PAPER.

THE MAN ABOUT TOWN.

BY CORNELIUS WEBBE.

2 vols. 12mo.

"This author has walked the streets and lanes of this great town with an observant eye and a benevolent heart. He reminds us (and this is no slender praise) of Charles Lamb."—*Quarterly Review.*

"Mr. Webbe is a periodical writer of very considerable talent and originality. * * * * Some of his sketches would not discredit the reputation of Charles Lamb."—*Literary Gazette.*

"Some of these essays are admirably written—impregnated with a pure philanthropy, and enlivened by an incessant play of a temper that is easily charmed by the bounties and loveliness of nature. The tendency of Mr. Webbe's writings is faultless. He takes the side of poverty and cheerfulness; and makes the sunshine fall so agreeably in the dark corners of life, that the perusal of his volumes can hardly fail to make people more grateful for the blessings they enjoy, and wiser in proportion."—*Atlas.*

"*The Man about Town* is quiet, unobtrusive, observant, reflective, and sentimental—part poet, part scholar, part moralist—who delights in crowds, because of the characters that are perpetually shifting across the *camera lucida* of the mind—to whom nothing is vulgar that has a taste of nature, nor any one repulsive with a touch of kindness. * * * * His humour is free from bitterness, and his sentiment from mawkishness."—*Spectator.*

"Mr. Webbe has here produced his best work * * * * hit off in a light, graceful, laughter-loving spirit, without one spark of spleen or bitterness, but, on the contrary, in a cordial and hearty manner. But though he has a quick and true apprehension of the ridiculous, and evinces, in all his sketches, a nice observance of character, he is most in his element when describing those homely English scenes which *Gainsborough* loved to paint. These he sketches with remarkable fidelity."—*The Sun.*

"Mr. Webbe mellows and brightens as he goes along, and, in artist phrase, shows more breadth than in his earlier productions.

This series of papers, hovering between the styles of Leigh Hunt and Charles Lamb, yet marked by striking individuality, is just such a work as England alone can produce—a true or lineal successor of the humours of the *Spectators* and *Tatlers*, adapted to a later age. These sketches are not ephemeral. They ought to last through a long day—an extended copyright.—*Tait's Magazine.*

"Lively and amusing, and dashed with a light humour which is highly pleasing."—*Morning Advertiser.*

"These are two volumes of Essays, characteristic of the simplicities, the oddities, and also the pleasantries of human nature. * * * * Half serious, half sportive, sometimes rambling over a variety of topics, and sometimes dissecting the peculiarities of that most unaccountable of all things—the human mind—the volumes make a curious, quaint, and amusing production."—*New Monthly Magazine.*

MITCHELL'S AUSTRALIA.

THREE EXPEDITIONS INTO THE INTERIOR

OF

EASTERN AUSTRALIA.

WITH

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE RECENTLY EXPLORED REGION

OF

AUSTRALIA FELIX,

AND OF THE PRESENT COLONY OF

NEW SOUTH WALES,

BY

MAJOR T. L. MITCHELL,

In 2 volumes, with Map and Plates.

"The rapidly increasing importance of our Australian colonies renders these volumes a valuable acquisition. They contain a great variety of particulars respecting a country which yet remains, in most part, a *terra incognita*."—*London Literary Gazette.*

"These are altogether the best volumes which have yet appeared on the subject of the interior of Australia. That singular country, heretofore described either as a waste of waters or as a parched desert, is here delineated with comprehension, truth, and vividness; and while new regions of boundless extent and great promise are revealed to our sights, the intelligence of a guide gives, even to those over which *we* have often travelled, a charm of novelty. As a leader of exploring parties through unknown regions, Major Mitchell appears to us to stand unrivalled."—*London Athenæum.*

THE SPIRIT OF THE EAST.

Illustrated in a Journal of Travels through Roumelia, during an eventful period.

BY D. URQUHART.

"*The Spirit of the East.*—The impartialities, absence of prejudice, and acute observation which Mr. Urquhart manifests in the volumes before us, could not fail of being the chief basis of a most valuable work; especially as a long residence of ten years in the countries described has enabled him to be a faithful and skilful commentator upon manners, customs, and peculiarities, which should not be viewed casually nor judged in haste. Even as a literary specimen of our author's abilities, this is a splendid production."—*Old Monthly Magazine, for September.*

JACK ADAMS, THE MUTINEER.

BY CAPTAIN CHAMIER.

Author of "The Life of a Sailor."

2 vols.—*Now ready.*

THE HUSSAR.

A TALE.

BY G. R. GLEIG.

In 2 vols.

TRAVELS IN AFRICA.

BY PRINCE PUCKLER MUSKAU.

2 vols.

BERKELEY CASTLE.

2 vols.

THE ONLY DAUGHTER.

A NOVEL.

EDITED BY G. R. GLEIG.

2 vols.—*Now ready.*

LORD BROUGHAM'S

SKETCHES OF PUBLIC CHARACTERS,

SPEECHES, DISCOURSES AND ESSAYS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A DISSERTATION ON THE ELOQUENCE OF THE ANCIENTS

BY HENRY LORD BROUGHAM.

In this volume will be found Sketches of the following celebrated individuals:—Mr. William Cobbet—Mr. Stephen—Mr. Roscoe—Mr. Creevy—The Emperor Alexander—Lord Castlereagh—Mr Horner—Mr. Wilberforce—Mr. Bentham—Mr. Dumont—Mr. Mill—Sir James Mackintosh—Mr. Canning—Lord Dudley—Mr. Huskisson—Mr. Wyvill—Major Cartwright—Sir Samuel Romilly—Mr. Grattan—Lord Grenville—Mr. Archibald Fletcher—Lord Archibald Hamilton—Lord Rosslyn—Mr. James Brougham Sir W. Scott.

From the London Athenæum of Aug. 11.

"It is not often we allow so much space as this to any work; and yet so much remains of interest in these sketches of PUBLIC CHARACTERS, that we may hereafter venture to make further extracts."

From the London Literary Gazette.

"We know not to what to liken the various and luxuriant contents of these volumes. To a great forest, in which every thing seems to grow—wild, stately, overspreading; with lowly shrubs and magnificent trees, and parasites too, and briars and thorns, and blossoms and fruits: all that a fertile soil might produce, the winds of tempest wave and twist, or the gentler breath of heaven fan with grace and beauty? If the simile apply, we may say of it, in the language of Macbeth, that it is '*a moving wood.*' "

THE BENCH AND THE BAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Random Recollections of the Lords and Commons."
"The Great Metropolis," &c.

2 vols. 12mo.—*Now ready.*

"In these volumes, as in a mirror, the general reader can catch a glimpse of all the leading members of the legal profession. The work is highly interesting, and will circulate extensively among readers of every class. The anecdotes are lively, characteristic, and happily introduced."—*Sun.*

FOUR YEARS IN PARAGUAY,

UNDER THE

DICTATOR FRANCIA.

BY ROBERTSON.

In 2 vols.—*Now ready.*

THE MIDDY;

OR,

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF EDWARD LASCELLES

Now ready.

"As a sketch of life on sea and shore, he is equal to Captain Hall, and higher praise no man need covet."—*Liverpool Mail.*

"The volumes, we venture to assert, have not been surpassed in matter of untiring interest by any similar work of late years."—*Farley's Bristol Journal.*

"There is a pleasant freshness in the scenes before us that remind us of Captain Marryat and Captain Chamier * * * with this we conclude, cordially recommending these entertaining volumes to our readers."—*Literary Gazette.*

NAPOLEON MEMOIRS.

EVENINGS WITH PRINCE CAMBACÉRÈS.

BY BARON LANGON.

2 vols. 12mo.

"This is one of the many very clever *Memoirs* which have, within a few years, formed so considerable a portion of the current French literature; and, like every thing relating to Napoleon and his times, it offers much that is attractive to the reader."—*News.*

NAPOLEON AND HIS TIMES.

BY CAULAINCOURT,

DUKE OF VICENZA.

2 vols. 12mo.

"As might naturally be inferred, possess in portions absorbing interest."—*Knickerbocker.*

HEALTH AND BEAUTY.

An Explanation of the Laws of Growth and Exercise, through which a pleasing contour, symmetry of form and graceful carriage of the body are acquired, and the common deformities of the spine and chest prevented.

BY JOHN BELL, M. D.

"From the title itself, and the authority on which the book is put forth, the reading public may judge of the interest of the subjects treated, as well as of the degree of credit which may fairly attach to a work of the kind, sent forth under such auspices. A slight examination serves to shew that the contents are quite of a comprehensive character; and that though the book is little, it contains much that is pertinent to the subject of 'health and beauty.'"—*Baltimore American.*

SKETCHES OF PARIS.

BY JOHN SANDERSON, ESQ.

Second edition.—In 2 volumes, 12mo.

ODDITIES OF LONDON LIFE.

BY PAUL PRY.

ELLEN GLANVILLE.

BY A LADY OF RANK.

In 2 volumes, 12mo.—*Now ready.*

"A novel, combining in a very remarkable manner the spirit and satiric wit of Mrs. Gore with the hitherto unrivalled truth and simplicity of the late Miss Austin."

WALTER TYRRELL.

A NOVEL.

In 2 vols. 12mo.

THE SQUATTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "RICHARD HURDIS."

2 vols.

To the admirers of Shakspeare and to Christian Families.

THE WISDOM AND GENIUS

OF

SHAKSPEARE:

Comprising Moral Philosophy; Delineations of Character; Paintings of Nature and the Passions; with 700 Aphorisms; and Miscellaneous Pieces.

With select and original Notes and Scriptural References.

BY THE REV. THOMAS PRICE,

IN A BEAUTIFUL POCKET VOLUME.

"The best attempt ever made to index Shakspeare."—*Sunday Times.*

"The idea of this volume is as felicitous, as the execution of it is admirable."—*The Age.*

"Shakspeare 'cut out in little stars'—worth its weight in gold to the English reader."—*Tait.*

"It is a most delightful book."—*Welshman.*

EXPEDITION OF DISCOVERY

INTO THE

INTERIOR OF AFRICA,

IN 1837,

Through the Countries of the Great Namaquas, Boschmans, and Hill Damaras,

Under the auspices of the British Government, and the Royal Geographical Society.

BY SIR J. E. ALEXANDER, K. L. S., &c.

In 2 vols. post 8vo., with Map and numerous Illustrations.

Now ready.

"In this narrative we find Sir James Alexander, as hitherto, lively and entertaining. Struggling through some 4000 miles of a wild and savage country, he has greatly enlarged the bounds of our geographical knowledge, and done much towards the accumulation of natural history; but the chief interest of the work lies in its personal adventures and vicissitudes; the gallant Captain having encountered all the dangers of lion, elephant, rhinoceros, gnu, ostrich, and baboon combat."—*Literary Gazette.*

"The whole work is remarkably lively and intelligent, abounding as it advances in scenes of deep interest."—*New Monthly Magazine.*

THE BRITISH SENATE.

A

SECOND SERIES

OF

RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS

OF THE

LORDS AND COMMONS.

2 vols. 12mo.—*Now ready.*

"It contains sketches of the leading members of the British Parliament, which are commended in the London prints for fidelity, and which we may applaud for vivacity and interest, having found the volumes upon perusal variously amusing and instructive."—*National Gazette.*

A ROMANCE OF VIENNA.

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

In 2 vols. 12mo.—*Now ready.*

"This is without doubt the best of Mrs. Trollope's novels."—*London Athenæum.*

TALES OF IRELAND.

BY WILLIAM CARLETON.

Author of "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry."

"The prison scene, in which the two brothers, their broken-hearted mother, and the father, Dan Gallagher, are the actors, is one which no reader can possibly forget—it is the very soul of natural pathos itself, while the moral conveyed by it is irresistible."—*Belfast News-Letter.*

"What tale more abounds in real Irish fun than 'Neal Malone,' and where will we find a more touching narrative than 'The Dream of a Broken Heart."—*Scots Times.*

DUTY AND INCLINATION.

A NOVEL.

EDITED BY MISS L. E. LANDON.

In 3 vols.—*Now ready.*

THE HEIR OF SELWOOD.

BY MRS. GORE,

Author of "Mothers and Daughters," &c.

2 vols.—*Now ready.*

"Like all of Mrs. Gore's novels, '*The Heir of Selwood*' displays an intimate observation of no slight acquaintance with the human heart. The story, founded on the substitution of a fictitious child, is replete with interest; and the effects upon the principal actors at different periods of their lives—when young, middle aged and elderly—are very naturally as well as forcibly painted."—*Lit. Gaz.*

MANNERS OF THE DAY.

BY MRS. GORE.

Author of "The Heir of Selwood."

2 vols.

MELTON DE MOWBRAY.

A NOVEL.

In 2 vols. 12mo.

"This is a well drawn picture of life, and obviously from real personages and circumstances. Indeed, we recognise both, as must be the case with any one familiar with London for the last forty years. Bankers, men of fashion, fox hunters, &c. &c., figure in the page; and the various turns of their fortunes and misfortunes furnish ample matter for the novelist."—*Literary Gazette.*

THE WIFE HUNTER.

BY THE MORIARTY FAMILY.

2 vols. 12mo.

These admirable volumes, says the Dublin Evening Mail, have excited a deserved and lively interest in the novel reading world. 'The Wife Hunter' is the work of a shrewd, satirical, and withal an extremely good natured writer.

RICHARD HURDIS;

OR,

THE AVENGER OF BLOOD.

Second Edition.

2 vols. 12mo.—*Now ready.*

"The title of this book did not prepare us for a work so powerfully wrought and so ably written as we find it to be. It proclaims the catastrophe a little too abruptly—and a similar fault is evident throughout. We are all along prepared for what is going to happen by ingenious innuendoes and pregnant hints, that detract much from the interest of the narrative. But the author tells his terrible tale of retribution with a force and correctness of style, a power of description, and an earnestness and directness of manner, which amply redeem the miner defect of his story. Although but little dramatic art is evident in the construction, yet we do not recollect an instance where he has wandered into episode, or indulged in descriptions and speculations, which do not have a bearing upon the events of his narrative. The interest is well sustained throughout, and there is a harrowing power in many of the scenes. The interview between Richard Hurdis and Catharine Walton in the second volume, is described with the pen of a master. We shall do injustice to this extraordinary work if we attempt to give any idea of its merits by a quotation. It should be read and judged of as a whole."—*New York Mirror.*

THE LIFE OF HANNAH MORE.

WITH SOME NOTICES OF HER SISTERS.

2 vols. 12mo.

"We can heartily commend these volumes to our readers, as well on account of the subjects, so fruitful of good example and valuable moral and religious lessons, as the ample stores of new and interesting information, derived from an immense number of private letters, and the living memoirs of numerous friends."—*N. Y. Knickerbocker.*

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

MISS LANDON.

BEAUTIFUL EDITION—WITH A FINE PORTRAIT.

1 vol. 8vo.